

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework fosters independence, self-reliance, self-esteem, co-operation and responsibility and life-long learning. It is an essential part of primary education as it re-enforces what children learn in school. It provides a link between teacher and parent and encourages parental involvement in their child's education.

In general, homework is meant to be achievable by a child working on their own to the best of their ability. It is normally prepared by the teacher in class. It can be used to practice what is done in school or can be designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity with emphasis on what has been covered in school.

FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF HOMEWORK

Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays with certain exceptions:

- If homework has been neglected during the week
- In senior classes some project work is undertaken at weekends.
- Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given 'homework off' as a treat or as acknowledgement of some special occasion.

The following are guidelines for time spent at homework. Different children will complete the same homework in different lengths of time. Time spent will vary from day to day and also from the beginning to the end of the school year. It is important to remember that it is the quality and not the quantity of homework that matters. The following are general guidelines:

Infants	0 to 20 minutes
Rang 1 and 2	20 to 30 minutes
Rang 3 and 4	30 to 40 minutes
Rang 5 and 6	40 to 50 minutes

If parents have a concern about the amount of time a child is spending at homework, they should speak to the class teacher.

CONTENT

Usually, homework contains a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks. However, it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.

Homework will regularly contain reading, spellings, tables, written work, drawing/colouring, collecting information/items and finishing work started in class. Children often feel that reading and learning tasks are not real homework. Parents should value the important role they can play in listening to reading and items to be learned, ensuring this work is done well.

HOMEWORK FOR INFANT CLASSES

Infants are not expected to complete written homework every night. However parents are asked to read with their child every night regardless of whether or not there is new reading material assigned. Parents will be aware of required written homework by checking their child's schoolbag daily as infants do not have homework journals or diaries.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Pupils should:

- Enter homework accurately in homework diary. Infant classes do not have homework diaries, so parents are asked to check the school bag for homework. The children will have been told in class what needs to be done.
- Ensure they take home relevant books and copies.
- Complete homework assignments to the best of their ability.
- Present written work neatly.

Parents/Guardians should:

- Encourage a positive attitude towards homework in all subjects from an early age.
- Encourage children to work independently as far as possible. Resist over-helping.
- Encourage children to organise themselves for homework. Have all books and materials to hand. The pupil should have the Homework Journal open to tick off work as it is completed.
- Agree a suitable time for doing homework, taking into account of age, the need for playtime, relaxation and family time.
- Providing a quiet place, suitable work surface, free from distractions, interruptions and T.V.
- Encourage good presentation and neatness within a reasonable time.
- Sign the homework diary (1st-6th classes) checking that all homework is complete.
- Check that the child has all necessary books, homework journal, copies, pencils, mathematical equipment, dictionary, P.E. clothes, if needed for the next school day.
- Communicate difficulties to the teacher using the homework journal.

Teachers should:

- Set homework, review assignments and provide feedback to students.
- Monitor homework to help identify pupils with special difficulties

CORRECTING HOMEWORK

Parents are asked not to correct their child's homework. Mistakes in homework can indicate problem areas to the teacher. If a child is struggling with homework and becoming frustrated this should be communicated to the class teacher so that support can be put in place. A child who is struggling should not be forced to finish homework – homework should not turn into a fight between parents and children.

Ideally, teachers check homework on a daily basis. However, with large class numbers, it is not always possible to check each child's homework journal every day. As children get older and learn to

work independently, some items of homework are checked less often, e.g. every second day or once a week.

Some items of homework (and class work) may be checked by children themselves, under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children as it promotes responsibility and self esteem.

INCOMPLETE HOMEWORK

Parents should write a note to inform the class teacher why homework has not been completed. Children may be asked to finish the homework in their spare time or the following night. Where no parental explanation is given, children may be asked to stay in at break time to finish their work.

