

Homework Policy

Introduction

It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis.

Homework is an important part of the children's learning.

It links home and school and can be a means to self-discipline and good study habits for the pupil.

Aims:

St. Anne's National School, Tyrrellspass hopes to achieve the following aims by introducing this homework policy:

- To benefit pupil learning.
- To reinforce work undertaken in class
- To develop study skills
 - To promote a similar approach to homework across all classes and provide continuity
- To strengthen links between home and school.

Guidelines:

1) Why give homework?

- To re-enforce what the child learns during the day.
- To provide a link between teacher and parent/ guardian
- To develop a child's concentration skills and develop a work ethic
- Homework is meant to be achievable by a child, i.e. it provides an opportunity to practice work already done. The teacher in class normally prepares the homework. However sometimes with senior classes, some homework is designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity.
- Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their individual ability.

2) How often is homework given?

- Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays.
- Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given "homework off" as a treat or acknowledgement of some special occasion.
- Please note extra homework may sometimes be given during the week or at weekends if a child has not done homework, made a suitable effort or presented untidy work.
- The resource and Learning Support teachers also assign homework for the children in their classes. Individual arrangements are made between the learning support/ Resource teaches and the parent/ guardians of the children concerned.

3) What is the content of homework?

- Ideally homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks.
- This balance is not always possible and can vary considerably from day to day. 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, pieces to be “learned by heart”, drawing/colouring, collecting information/items, finishing work started in class.
- Use of ICT will also be encouraged e.g. “Mathletics”, researching a topic, word processing etc.
- Children often feel that reading and “learning by heart” is not real homework. Parents/ guardians can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned ensuring that this work is done well.

4) How much time should be spent at homework?

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 only:

Junior and senior infants	up to 10 minutes
1 st and 2 nd classes	up to 20 minutes
3 rd and 4 th classes	up to 30 minutes
5 th and 6 th classes	up to 40 minutes.

5) How much help should parent/ guardians give?

- Parents/ guardians should try to help their children with homework by providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework and preventing interruptions or distractions, like T.V., or other children.
- Children should do written homework themselves and parents / guardians should only help when the child has difficulty.
- If a child has difficulty with homework, the parent/ guardians should help the child to overcome the difficulty with further explanations or examples but not by actually doing the homework for the child. In this case the parent/ guardian should write a note to the teacher explaining the problem.

6) How often should parents/ guardians monitor homework?

- Parents/ guardians should check and sign a child’s homework journal every evening.

- The pupil's journal is an important record of child's homework. It is also a valuable means of communication between parents/ guardians and teachers.
- Ideally, all written messages to your child's teacher should be put in the homework journal (additional pages can be found at the end of the journal).
- Please check that your child records his/ her homework neatly in the correct page and ticks each item of homework when completed.

7) How often do teachers monitor homework?

- Ideally teachers like to 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 of items of homework are checked less often e.g. every second day or once per 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.

8) When should parents/ guardians communicate with the teachers about homework?

- When your child cannot do homework due to family circumstances.
- When your child cannot do homework because she/he cannot understand some aspect.
- If the time spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time.

9) When should homework be done?

- Each family situation is different- both parents/guardians working, child minders, etc. Ideally, homework should be done before any television is watched, soon after school while your child is still fresh, however some children do need a break before starting homework.
- Homework should never be left until the morning time before school.

Conclusion:

This policy and guidelines have been prepared based on the conditions and attitudes in the school at the time of writing. It may be altered, revised and updated to comply with any changes in conditions, legal requirements or any recommendations from the Board of Management.