

SN an Croí Ró Naofa (Belclare)

Primary School Homework Policy

Introduction

Homework is an integral link in the chain of communication between school and home. Parents/guardians can monitor their child's progress through continual reference to homework diaries and ongoing liaison with teachers. This policy seeks to further strengthen positive home-school links by streamlining the processes involved.

The Homework Policy of SN an Croí Ró Naofa has been formulated by staff in consultation with parents, with input from the Parents' Association, and has been ratified by the Board of Management. A school-wide survey was conducted to ascertain the amount of time children spend on homework.

Rationale

The need to redraft and amend the school's homework policy arises from the following key considerations:

- To further strengthen links between home and school.
- To reinforce the learning experiences encountered by pupils during the school day.
- To provide clear guidance on the recommended amount of time to be spent on homework.
- To emphasise that the quality of homework is more important than the quantity.
- To ensure a shared understanding that learning-based homework is prioritised over written homework.
- To promote the development of positive study habits that support lifelong learning.
- To clarify the steps parents should take when pupils experience difficulty with homework or when homework is not completed.

Relationship to School Ethos

It is the policy of the school, insofar as is practicable, to identify the individual needs of each pupil and to put appropriate measures in place to support those needs. We recognise that all children learn in different ways and that they may approach homework differently. For some pupils, homework can present particular challenges, and in such cases individualised supports may be required. Parents/guardians are encouraged to approach the class teacher when difficulties arise.

As a school, we aim to foster positive and healthy attitudes towards learning.

The school also encourages the active involvement of parents/guardians in supporting their child to take responsibility for their own learning and to work independently. The school's homework policy is designed to support and promote these principles.

Aim of this policy.

The aims of homework in the school are:

- To consolidate learning through the reinforcement of classwork.
- To enable children to develop a sense of responsibility and independence.
- To enhance self-esteem through the provision of achievable and appropriate homework tasks, including the use of a differentiated work menu where required.
- To foster self-discipline and the development of effective study skills.
- To promote consistency and a uniform approach to homework across all classes.
- To further develop and strengthen links between home and school.

Policy Content

It is school policy to assign appropriate class-related levels of homework as an important reinforcement in the learning process. Good study habits are fostered, independent learning is promoted and self-discipline is developed. Homework is normally given at the end of the school day. The following are the allocations for our school –

Junior Infants: - 0 – 15 minutes

Senior Infants: - 0 – 15 minutes

First & Second Class- Up to 30 minutes

Third & Fourth Class- Up to 45 minutes

Fifth & Sixth Class- Up to one hour.

- Priority should always be given to learning homework such as spellings, tables etc. Reading is also of key importance and parents/guardians are actively encouraged to ensure this is completed nightly.
- Parents/guardians are requested to inform the class teacher if a child is regularly spending longer than the recommended time on homework. On occasions where homework is not fully completed within the allocated time, parents/guardians may communicate this by way of a note in the homework diary.
- Homework assigned should reflect an appropriate balance between reading, learning and written work. Time spent on reading and learning is considered to be of equal importance to written work. While this balance may vary from day to day depending on the nature of the work, homework will typically include activities such as reading, spellings, tables, written exercises, work to be learned by heart, drawing/colouring, project work, the collection of information or items, and the completion of work begun in class. Pupils may not always perceive reading or learning by heart as homework; however, these activities form an essential part of the learning process. Parents/guardians are encouraged to support their child by listening to reading and learning tasks and by ensuring that this work is completed to an appropriate standard.
- It is not the policy of the school to assign homework in isolation. Homework is generally linked to classwork and forms an integral and consistent part of the teaching and learning process.
- Special Education Teachers may, from time to time, assign homework to pupils on their caseload, most commonly in the area of reading. This will occur only in consultation with the class teacher and will not constitute additional or extra homework.

- Where homework is causing undue stress or anxiety for a pupil, parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss these concerns with the class teacher. In circumstances where homework cannot be completed on a particular evening, parents/guardians are asked to inform the teacher by means of a written note in the homework diary or homework folder.
- Homework is generally based on work already covered in class and is clearly explained to pupils in advance. Account is taken of the differing abilities, needs and learning styles of pupils, and homework may be differentiated accordingly.
- All pupils are provided with a homework diary, which acts as a key means of communication between home and school. Homework is monitored on a daily basis by teachers, though some tasks may be self-correcting. Parents/guardians are advised to supervise and check homework each evening.
- On occasion, and at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, pupils may be granted a “homework pass” or “homework off” as a reward or in recognition of a particular achievement or special event.

Use of AI in the completion of Homework

AI tools (like ChatGPT, Claude, and Photomath) can assist primary school students with homework by explaining difficult concepts, brainstorming ideas, or providing step-by-step help, but they should be used as learning aids under the supervision of an appropriate adult, not replacements for critical thinking or problem solving. **Responsible use involves parental/guardian supervision verifying accuracy, and focusing on "how" and "why" rather than just answers to avoid over-reliance. The Digital Age of Consent in Ireland is set at 16. Parents/Guardians are responsible to ensure safeguards are in place to protect their child/ren online.** The school participates in safer internet day yearly and children are educated on internet usage.

Data Privacy: Parents/Guardians should ensure that children never enter personal information, school names, photographs of the school- (teachers, staff or other pupils) or private data into AI tools.

Ethical Usage: Using AI to complete entire homework assignments is not acceptable. It is also not appropriate for children to use AI to generate answers without “working out” and “problem solving” to reach the answer or conclusion. **AI should be used to support learning, not to do the work entirely.**

When used correctly AI has the potential to enhance learning and teaching. It is important that proper supervision is in place to ensure that children access appropriate information and that it is used as a tool to enhance the pupil’s educational experience. Webwise provides accurate and up to date information on internet safety-details are available at www.webwise.ie and it is a useful tool for parents/guardians to assess the appropriateness of different apps/internet sites.

Guidelines for Parents/Guardians

A homework information sheet is distributed to parents/guardians each year outlining suggested homework times and the procedures to be followed when completing homework.

1. Provide a suitable, comfortable place for homework.
2. Remove distractions such as television and younger siblings where possible.
3. Help the child to overcome difficulties through explanation and guidance.
4. Parents/guardians should not do the homework for their children.
5. Send a note to the class teacher if a problem arises. This can be done through the homework diary.
6. Check and sign the homework diary regularly.
7. Notify the class teacher if the time spent on homework exceeds the recommended time.
8. As children may tire later in the evening, encourage homework to be completed as early as possible.
9. Discourage homework being completed in the morning.
10. Ensure that basic supplies such as rulers, pencils, rubbers, tables books, etc., are available at home should the need arise.

We are also aware that parents/guardians know their children best and are best placed to create a routine that works for their individual child/children. Therefore, the above should be viewed as guidelines to be followed.

Evaluation

- In-class corrections
- Checking homework diaries
- Parent-teacher meetings
- Teacher designated tests
- Teacher observation
- Feedback from parents and pupils

Roles and responsibilities/Implementation

All stakeholders have a role to play in the implementation of this policy from pupils, parents/guardians, teachers and Board of Management.

Ratification/Communication

This policy was presented and ratified by the Board of Management on _____ and will be reviewed in _____.

Signed-

Chairperson

Date

Principal

Date