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Homework Policy

Introduction

This policy was drawn up by the staff at a Staff Meeting on 10th September 2010 and circulated to the Board of Management and Parents Association for observations and feedback.

Why give homework?

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.

How often is homework given?

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.

Homework Content

Usually, homework contains 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 and finishing work started in class. Children often feel that reading and 'learning by heart' is not real homework. Parents can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned, ensuring this work is done well.

Duration of 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:

Infants	0 to 20 minutes
Rang 1 & 2	20 to 30 minutes
Rang 3 & 4	30 to 40 minutes
Rang 5 & 6	40 to 60 minutes

Pupils should:

- enter homework accurately in their homework diary.
- 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.

How often do teachers monitor homework?

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.

What happens when Homework is not done?

Where homework has not been attempted or completed, on a once off basis, (there may be understandable reasons) the teacher should be notified, verbally or by note.

When homework is not done regularly the teacher contacts parents with a view to resolving the situation. If the situation continues, then the matter is brought to the attention of the Principal who will contact the parents/guardians and arrange a meeting to discuss how the matter can be resolved.