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HOMEWORK POLICY

Introduction

Scoil Bhríde recognises homework is an integral link in the chain of communication between school and home. This policy, devised by teachers in consultation with parents/guardians and approved by the Board of Management, is intended to maximise the benefit to children of time spent on homework. It details reasons for homework, types of homework that may be given to children at different stages, recommendations on time to be spent on homework, advice on conditions that should be available to the child for doing homework and what to do if problems arise. It also identifies the roles and responsibilities of all involved.

Rationale

- Continue to promote positive home/school communication
- Maximise the benefits of homework to the children's learning
- Update our practices considering parental, pupil and staff views on homework
- Ensure clarity and consistency on homework content, how it is assigned and the amount of time that should be spent on it

Relationship to School Ethos

Scoil Bhríde is an inclusive, diverse school catering for the individual needs of every child so they can reach their potential. The school also encourages the active involvement of parents in enabling their child to take responsibility and work independently. The homework policy of the school facilitates these ideals.

Aims and Objectives

By updating our homework policy and practice, we aim to:

- Consolidate learning through reinforcement of class work
- Develop life skills including a sense of responsibility and independence
- Encourage self- motivation and initiative in children
- Promote consistent approach to homework across all classes which will allow children to benefit fully from the homework experience
- Further develop links between home and school and to encourage parental involvement in their child's education
- Develop and encourage a positive experience of homework

- Ensure that homework is meaningful and valuable to a child's learning and development

Types of Homework

Homework may include work from a variety of subjects such as languages, arts, mathematics, STEM, Social and Environmental Education, Wellbeing, Religion or project-based work. Work can consist of a combination of reading, written and oral work. Oral work may include tasks such as skip counting, learning tables, spellings, poetry, practicing an oral presentation or reading to an audience. However, the type and amount of homework given will vary depending on the class of the child and on the differentiated need. Attention should be paid to neatness of presentation in all work submitted.

Junior Classes (Infants to 2nd Class)

It is essential to the child's educational development that the work done in school is reinforced regularly at home. In Infant classes, homework consists of letter/words, numeracy, environmental maths, sound practice, basic literacy including sounding out of words and blending, reading and/or worksheets to be completed. Homework in the infant classes is assigned via letter and folders at the beginning of the week. In First- and Second-class homework is distributed weekly on sheets. Shared reading is an essential part of homework and should be completed **on a daily basis**. Consistency is key at this level as they transition through their various stages of reading development.

Senior Classes (Third to Sixth Class)

Homework set for these classes will have been prepared in school, based on work covered in school, and will consider the individual learning needs of the children. Therefore, the child should be capable of completing much of their homework independently. It is important that, your child develops a sense of pride in their work and good study habits.

Certain aspects of the work may be unfamiliar to the parent/guardian such as methods used in Mathematics or aspects of the Gaeilge programme. Parents are encouraged to refer to the NCCA website: Supporting your Child's Learning at Home | NCCA where there are resources available to help you support your child. It is important to hear your children read every day, to discuss the text and pictures with them and to question them on the piece read.

Oral homework is just as important as written work. Memorisation is an important aspect of homework that is sometimes neglected and can include tables, skip counting, poetry, English and Irish spelling. Regular revision of previous work is important.

In Sixth Class, great importance attaches to homework and to the child's general work habits. In this class there should be an emphasis on co-ordination and order in the approach to homework. Organisation of work submitted should be clear with date, numbering and lay-out clearly presented. At this stage the children should develop good study habits, a sense of ownership and responsibility as they prepare to transition to secondary level education.

Time to be spent on Homework

Timing spent on homework will depend on several factors including;

- the child's age
- the child's learning ability
- the child's level of concentration

The following times are suggested **each night** as a guide for parents or guardians:

Infants: 10 - 20 minutes

First/Second: 20 - 30 minutes

Third/Fourth: 30 - 40 minutes

Fifth/Sixth: 50 - 60 minutes

Teachers will check with children to ensure that time spent on homework is in line with these guidelines. We encourage parents to contact their child's teacher if there are any difficulties completing homework.

It is the school's policy that, should you choose to take your child out of school during the school term to go on holidays, the class teachers will not assign specific work for your child/ children. The onus is on the parents to cover and monitor the work missed.

Children with Additional Needs

Children who attend support with Special Education Teachers and students enrolled in our classes for autism will be assigned differentiated homework as appropriate. Such differentiated homework will be given so the child's learning targets can be supported.

Suggestions to support your child's learning at home:

- Provide your child with a suitable place and time to do their homework
- Prevent interruptions or distractions, like screens or excessive noise/interruptions from brothers/sisters/friends (children)
- Your child should do written homework independently and parents should only help when they have difficulty
- If a child has difficulty with homework, parents should help the child to overcome the difficulty with further explanation or examples, but not by actually doing the homework for the child

- If your child has persistent problems in completing their homework, you should write a note to the teacher explaining the problem
- Shared reading is meant to be an enjoyable exercise between parent and the child and it is an important opportunity to monitor your child's progress in reading.
- Children should **not** use the internet for any homework without parental supervision. Please refer to our Internet Acceptable Use Policy

When and how should parents communicate with the teachers about homework?

- When your child cannot do homework due to unavoidable circumstances
- When your child cannot do homework after an honest attempt because she/he cannot understand some aspect
- If the time being spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time
- If there are personal circumstances that are impacting negatively on your child's opportunity to complete homework to his/her best potential
- Communication should be done through email or a note in your child's homework diary

When should homework be done?

Homework will be given weekly and should be completed each night or as otherwise directed by your child's teacher. We highlight the importance of regular reading with your child, and this should always take priority **each night**. As homework is often given on a weekly basis, children may work ahead on their homework (e.g. math and spellings) to allow time for after school clubs at the discretion of their parents. Parents/Guardians should take responsibility for this as the primary educator of their child outside of school. Homework should not be completed in one evening.

What happens when homework is not done?

Please note that if homework is incomplete and there is no explanation given by parents – no note in diary or email, pupils will be asked to complete their homework, in school during discretionary time as indicated by the teacher. When homework is not done regularly the teacher will contact the parent/guardian, to resolve the situation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers:

- The class teacher assigns homework, taking into consideration the recommended time allocation for homework and monitors it at regular intervals through feedback from parents/guardians and students

- The class teacher ensures that homework is relevant and meaningful and differentiated when necessary to cater for individual learning needs of the students
- The Special Education Teacher assigns homework to the children in their support in collaboration with the Class Teacher as appropriate
- The class teacher and/ or Special Education Teacher will work with parents and children to help to create a positive homework experience should difficulties arise

Pupils

- Return homework on time
- Keep all books and copies in good condition, present written work neatly, carefully and well laid out
- Senior class students should ensure they have all materials for homework
- Complete homework to the best of their ability
- Recognise that not all homework learning will include writing but that oral work, reading, practical tasks and study tasks are equally as important

Parents/Guardians

- Encourage a positive attitude towards homework in all subjects from an early age
- Encourage children to work independently as far as possible and resist over-helping
- Encourage children to organise themselves for homework ensuring they have all books and materials to hand
- Agree a suitable time for doing homework, being aware of age, the need for playtime, relaxation and family time
- Providing a quiet place, suitable work surface, free from distractions, interruptions and screens
- Encourage good presentation and neatness within a reasonable time

- **Reading logs (either a sheet or in homework diary depending on class level) should be signed daily**
- **Homework Diaries should be signed weekly checking all homework is complete**
- Acknowledge that your child will make mistakes and encourage them to check back over their work to find and correct their own mistakes. Making mistakes is part of the learning process
- Check that your child has all necessary books, copies and any other items needed for the next school day
- Communicate difficulties to the teacher should they arise

Success Criteria

- The success criteria of this policy will be determined by feedback from parents, pupils and teachers. In general, where pupils are handing in satisfactory exercises and assignments, reading and memorising activities are well practiced, this will be interpreted as reflecting positively on this policy.

Review

This policy will be reviewed as required.

Ratification

This policy was ratified by Scoil Bhríde Board of Management on 08/06/26 (date)

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management