



Homework Policy

Why give homework?

- To re-inforce what the child learns during the day
- To provide a link between teacher and parent
- 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 practise work already done. It is normally prepared by the teacher in class. 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 – no more, no less.

How often is homework given?

- Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays. There are two 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 acknowledgment of some special occasion
- Please note extra homework may be sometime be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not done homework, made a suitable effort or presented untidy work.

What is the content of homework?

Homework may be of two types. These are:

- (a) Drill and exercise in the tool subjects. Study in these subjects can take many forms: arithmetic problems, studying and writing spelling lists, learning tables, practising penmanship, completing grammar exercises.
 - 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 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.
- (b) Activities which supplement school instruction in the content subject. These can be drawing pictures and learning religion questions, making maps or scrapbooks, writing letters to pen pals, viewing recommended television programmes and collecting concrete materials that can be used in class.

Homework must never be an introduction to unfamiliar material. When a child is asked to study new and unfamiliar material, he is confused and often misinterprets the content. Some children may be tempted to badger their parents into doing their homework;



Caheragh National School

19557H

others are given misinformation at home, while, worst of all, some children will be turned off homework through pure frustration.

Provided that children have a good comprehension of the content, there is nothing wrong with rote learning (tables, grammar rules, mnemonics) and memorising (poems, songs, religion questions).

In order that parents be acquainted with the homework which their children have to do, homework journals shall be used in each room. The children will write down their homework each evening before dismissal and shall have it signed by a parent upon completion. If homework is undone the class teacher shall write a signed note in the homework journal to that effect, that note to be countersigned by a parent that night. If homework is repeatedly undone the child shall be referred to the Principal. (See Code of Discipline).

Homework for above average pupils.

Above average people fall into three general groups, talented, superior and gifted. Talented pupils have above ordinary aptitude in special fields such as music, art, mathematics, design etc., but may only be rated as average on an overall intelligence test. Having a high capacity for training in their special fields, these pupils should be given advanced assignments in their area of ability. Members of the superior group are considerably above normal I.Q. range in most traits. They need challenging and stimulating homework. The gifted group, according to intelligence tests, constitutes approximately the upper 2% of the population. They are capable of outstanding achievement in at least one given field and often in several fields and of sustained concentration for long periods of time. They demonstrate originality, curiosity and resourcefulness and have perpetually questing minds.

Though all three types of brilliant students need special attention most teachers' time, because of large classes, is, of necessity focused on the middle and weaker groups. This problem can to some extent be overcome by the resourceful allocation of interesting projects and assignments. This might include providing for originality and creative contributions in the making of charts, maps, graphs, diagrams etc. in writing compositions, preparing reports, publishing a class or a school newspaper. It might also include extra reading, which would necessitate provision by the teacher of supplementary reading material (library books, an encyclopaedia, selected magazines). Language could be developed by requiring from such pupils' reports, both oral and written, on selected TV programmes and films. Such work would also encourage critical expression.

Homework for below average pupils

Children with learning difficulties learn better through using concrete materials and by having relatively short assignments with repetition of simple facts and numerous illustrations. Because they are likely to require considerable individual assistance with homework it is important to set standards of achievement at the child's level. Do not assign the same quantity of homework to them as to the main body of the class. For instance, assign only the first five questions of a 15 – question exercise in grammar. Arrange for considerable practise with basic skills. Emphasise neatness and thoroughness in all they do.



Please Note

From the above it will be apparent that the amount of homework given to weaker and stronger children will differ from that given to the general body of the class. Try to ensure that as far as possible each child has sufficient homework to engage him for the required time, while also being conscious of not overburdening slow learners.

How much time for 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 Infants	0 - 10 minutes
Senior Infants	Up to 20 minutes
Rang 1	Up to 30 minutes
Rang 2	Up to 40 minutes
Rang 3	Up to 50 minutes
Rang 4	Up to 1 hour
Rang 5	Up to 1 hour 15 minutes
Rang 6	Up to 1 hour 30minutes

Homework is given from Monday to Thursday. Normally there is no homework at weekends or on a school day just before a public holiday. However, children in middle and senior classes may sometimes be required to work independently on projects at weekends.

How much help should parents give?

- Parents should try to help their children with homework by:
 - Providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework
 - To prevent interruptions or distractions, like T.V. or other children
- Children should do written homework themselves and parents should only help when the child has difficulty
- If a child has difficulty with homework, the parents should help the child to overcome the difficulty with further explanation or examples, but not by actually doing the homework for the child. In this case the parent should write a note to the teacher explaining the problem
- Shared reading is not homework in the regular sense and it is simply meant to be an enjoyable exercise between parent and child. If it's not enjoyable, shared reading should not be done.

How often should parents monitor homework?

- Parents should check and sign a child's homework journal every evening
- The pupil's journal is an important record of the child's homework. It is also a valuable means of communication between parents and teachers
- Ideally, all written messages to your child's teacher should be put in the homework journal (additional pages available 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



Caheragh National School

19557H

- Caheragh National School newsletters and other notes to parents are folded and placed in the current day of the homework journal. Please check your child's journal for such notes on a regular basis.

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 items of homework are checked less often e.g. every second day or once per week
- Some items of homework (and classwork) may be checked by children themselves under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children.

When should parents 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 being spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time.

When should homework be done?

- Each family situation is different - both parents 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 need a break before starting homework
- Homework should never be left until morning time before school

Remember

If homework is a stressful experience between parent and child, something is wrong! This leads to poor learning and defeats the whole purpose. Should this happen on a regular basis, please contact the class teacher.

Signed:_____

Chairperson

Signed:_____

Principal

Date:_____

Date:_____