

Howth Road Mixed National School

Homework Policy

Why give homework?

- To reinforce what the child learns during the day.
- To provide a link between teacher and parent.
- To develop a child's concentration.
- To develop a work ethic
- It provides an opportunity to practise work already done. It is usually prepared by the teacher in class. However sometimes, with senior classes, some homework is designed to challenge children's ability and to 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 or where classwork is incomplete during the week.
 - In senior classes some project work is undertaken at weekend.
- Sometimes, at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given written 'homework off' as a treat or as acknowledgement of some special occasions.
- Please note that extra homework may sometimes be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not done homework, made a suitable effort in class or has presented untidy work.

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.
- However will regularly contain reading, spelling, 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 that this work is done well.

How much (time) homework?

The following are **guidelines** for time to be spent on homework. Different children will complete the same homework in different lengths of time. Time spend will vary from day to day and also from 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 to 10 minutes
Senior Infants	up to 20 minutes
1 st Class	up to 25 minutes
2 nd Class	up to 30 minutes
3 rd Class	up to 40 minutes
4 th Class	up to 45 minutes
5 th Class	up to 50 or 60 minutes
6 th Class	up to 50 or 60 minutes

How much help should parents give?

Parents can help their children with homework by:

- Providing them with a suitable environment and time to do their homework.
- Preventing distractions and interruptions (like television or other children) preferably quiet.

Children should do written homework themselves and parents should only help when the child has difficulty. If a child has difficulty with homework, parents may 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 difficulty with homework, write a note to the teacher explaining the problem.

How often should parents monitor homework?

- Parent should check and sign a child's homework journal every evening.
- The homework diary 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 diary.
- Please check that your child has recorded homework neatly on the correct page and tick each item when complete

- Letters and notes to parents are folded and placed in the homework diary. Please check for notes on a regular basis.

How often do teachers monitor homework?

- Ideally, teachers like to check homework on a daily basis.
- 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 classwork) may be checked by the 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 teachers about homework?

- When your child cannot do homework **under any circumstances**.
- When your child cannot do homework because (s)he cannot understand some aspect.
- If time being spent on homework is **often** longer than the recommended amount of time.

When should homework be done?

Each family situation is different – parents working, child minders, etc. Ideally, homework should be done early in the evening before other distraction and activities. Homework should be done early 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. If this happens on a regular basis, please contact the class teacher.