



Homework Policy

Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa

Ballymurn

Rationale

Homework fosters independence, self-reliance, self-esteem, co-operation and responsibility and lifelong 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. Younger children, however, will obviously need more support than older children. It is normally based on what has been taught in class.

Parents'/Guardians' role

Ireland's Constitution states that parents are the child's primary educators. Children spend significantly more time at home than at school therefore support from home is vital for a child's development during primary school.

Children need to know that their parents think homework is important. If they know their parents care, children have a good reason to complete assignments and hand them in on time. There is a lot that you can do to show that you value education and homework.

Homework can bring together parents, children and teachers in a common effort to improve student learning. Helping your child with homework is an opportunity to improve your child's chances of doing well in school and life. By helping your child with homework, you can help him/her learn important lessons about discipline and responsibility. You are in a unique position to help your child make connections between school work and the 'real world' and thereby bring meaning and fun to your child's homework experience.

Homework should be enjoyable and should promote learning as an enjoyable experience.

Aims:

- To consolidate work being done at school
- To keep parents in touch and involved in their children's work
- To develop and encourage the habit of independent study

Guidelines for Teachers:

- Homework should be an integral part of the subject being taught and given in order to consolidate work done – not as an exercise in isolation
- Homework should never be given unless the teacher has thoroughly prepared and explained what is to be done.
- Homework must be consistent – a small amount and given in such a way as to form a pattern for the children so that they are more likely to remember it.

- Teachers will check that homework is being done and will give extra help where difficulties occur.
- In the event of a parent not wishing that their child would participate in homework activities, a letter must be forwarded to the school expressing this wish and must be kept on school files.

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.
- Monitor how long their child is spending at homework. Set clear but realistic starting and finishing times to keep children focused and to avoid homework 'dragging on' all evening.
- Providing a quiet place, suitable work surface, free from distractions, interruptions and TV.
- Encourage good presentation and neatness within a reasonable time.
- Ensure they read with/to their child/ren regularly, in a relaxed atmosphere where the emphasis is on enjoyment.
- Sign the homework diary checking that all homework is complete.
- Check that the child has all necessary books, homework journal, copies, pencils, mathematical equipment, dictionary, PE clothes, if needed for the next school day.
- Communicate difficulties to the teacher using the homework journal.

How often is homework given?

Homework is usually given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays with certain exceptions:

- If homework has been neglected during the week, without explanation from parents.
- Children may bring library books home to read for enjoyment at the weekends.
- Sometimes, at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given 'homework off' as a treat, as a reward or as acknowledgement of some special occasion.

Homework Content

Usually, homework contains a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks. Over the past number of years, we have changed our homework focus in Ballymurn N.S., so that less emphasis is placed on written homework, to allow reading and learning homework to be prioritised, as we felt that at times reading, which is the most important homework element, was neglected due to time constraints in homes, to ensure that the written homework was completed.

Homework for 1st-6th class will regularly contain English reading, Irish reading, spellings, tables, maths, pieces to be 'learned by heart', drawing/colouring, collecting information/items. Children often feel that reading and 'learning by heart' is not real homework and the aim of updating this policy is to continue working on the change of this view that we have been promoting over the past two years. We have also introduced some digital maths homework, which children complete online.

At Infant level, children will work on phonics, reading and a small amount of written work.

Parents play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned, ensuring this work is done well. Homework is more beneficial if carefully planned by teachers and if it has direct meaning to students. It should be a positive experience, not a punishment exercise.

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 may 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 times are general guidelines only and refer to the MAXIMUM time it should take to complete homework:

Junior/Senior Infants	15-30 minutes (after introductory period)
1 st /2 nd Class	30-40 minutes
3 rd /4 th Class	40-50 minutes
5 th /6 th Class	50-60 minutes

**** If your child is experiencing regular problems with his/her homework or it is taking too long to complete, please make an appointment to discuss your concerns with the class teacher****

Homework will vary depending on themes/topics being taught and time of school year.

Pupils should

- enter homework accurately at school 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.

Teachers' Role

The teacher will set appropriate homework, review assignments and provide feedback to students. They will monitor and differentiate homework to cater for all pupils. The homework assigned will reflect what is being taught in class. Teachers will regularly evaluate the homework they set to ensure that it is of benefit to the children.

How often do teachers monitor homework?

Ideally, teachers check homework on a daily basis. However, it is not always possible to check each child's homework and/or journal every day. 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. As a lot of our homework is now reading and oral work, there is a certain level of trust between pupils and teachers, and onus on pupils to complete this work, without needing to provide written proof in school. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children as it promotes responsibility and self esteem. Some items of homework, such as project work or work requiring research on behalf of the children, may be set over a longer period of time, especially in the older classes. This is good preparation for secondary school where homework is often staggered.

What happens when homework is not done?

Parents should send a note, in the homework diary, to the class teacher explaining why their child has been unable to complete their homework. If a pupil has not completed homework, and does not have an explanation note from a parent, the teacher will write a note in the journal for the

parent to sign. When homework is not done regularly or without explanation the teacher will contact parents with a view to discussing and resolving the situation.

If the situation continues, then the matter is brought to the attention of the Principal who will contact the parent(s) and arrange a meeting to discuss how the matter can be resolved.

Why give homework?

- 🚦 To re-enforce 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
- 🚦 To further develop independent work habits
- 🚦 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, however, in senior classes, some homework is designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity.

What is expected?

- 🚦 Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their ability – **no more no less.**

Standard of Work?

- 🚦 Children are expected to do their best at all times. A high standard of neatness and penmanship is expected

Review:

This policy will be referred to regularly to check that it is being consistently implemented by all staff. A comprehensive review took place during the 2022/2023 school year, where, following some trial changes to homework practice, consultations with parents, pupils and staff were considered as part of the process of updating this policy.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 17th December, 2012 and updated on January 2023. The policy is on the school drive for all staff to access. Parents may access the policy through the school website 'www.ballymurnns.ie'

Signed:



Chairperson
Board of Management

07/02/22
Date: January 2023

