

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.
- Homework catch up
- Homework is not set for children who miss school for holiday reasons during the school year or for short term illness.

What is the content of homework?

- Ideally homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks. This is further outlined in Appendix A.
- 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.

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. The conditions/setting in which the children do their homework will also impact on the amount of time spent. It is important to remember that it is the quality and not the quantity of homework that matters. The following are general guidelines only:

Rang 2	Up to 30 minutes
Rang 3	Up to 35 minutes
Rang 4	Up to 40 minutes
Rang 5	Up to 50 minutes
Rang 6	Up to 60 minutes

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. Appendix A contains further information.

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
- Ideally 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.

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.
- Please check that your child records his/her homework neatly in the correct page and ticks each item of homework when completed. Parents/guardians are asked to sign the homework journal nightly.
- Notes and letters to parents/guardians 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 will 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 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 exceptional 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.

Incomplete homework

- In general teachers will not accept notes for incomplete homework outside of the reasons outlined above.

- Regular incomplete homework may result in sanctions being applied from the school Code of Behaviour.
- St. Conleth and Mary's operates a homework catch up from 11am – 11.15am every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. This is supervised by a teacher and children are provided with an opportunity to complete any incomplete homework from the previous night.

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.

Date of ratification: _____

Review date: _____

Signed: _____

Pat O'Mahony
Chairperson, Board of Management

DRAFT

Appendix A

Learning and study					Written Work		
	Gaeilge	English	SESE/ other sub- jects	Maths	Maths	Other subject areas	Recommended Time
Second	Reading	Reading Spellings		Tables	1 exercise	1 exercise 3-4 nights	30 minutes
Third	Reading	Reading Spellings		Tables	1 exercise	1 exercise most nights	35 minutes
Fourth	Reading Spellings	Reading Spellings	Reading Study	Tables	1 exercise	2 exercises 3-4 nights	40 minutes
Fifth	Reading Spellings	Reading Spellings	Reading Study	Tables	1 exercise	2 exercises	50 minutes
Sixth	Reading Spellings	Reading Spellings	Reading Study	Tables	1 exercise	2 exercises	60 minutes