

Homework Policy

Introduction

At Scoil Naomh Náille we prescribe homework for the following reasons

- To reinforce what the child learns during the day.
- To provide a link between teacher and parent.
- To develop a child's concentration skills.
- To develop a work ethic.

Homework is meant to be achievable by a child, i.e. it provides an opportunity to practice 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 essays, cloze procedures or project work may be undertaken at weekends

Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given vouchers granting no homework as a treat or as acknowledgment of some special occasion/reward. Please note extra homework may sometimes be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not completed homework, not made a suitable effort 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.

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 should be spent on 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	Up to 20 minutes
Senior Infants	Up to 20 minutes
Rang 1	Up to 30 minutes
Rang 2	Up to 30 minutes
Rang 3	Up to 40 minutes
Rang 4	Up to 40 minutes
Rang 5	Up to 1 hour
Rang 6	Up to 1 hour

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
- ◆ preventing interruptions or distractions, for example; T.V. or computers.

Children should do written homework themselves and parents should only help when the child is experiencing 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.

How often should parents monitor homework?

Parents should check 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.

Written messages to your child's teacher can be put in the homework journal (additional pages are available at the end of the journal). Please check that your child records their homework neatly in the correct page and ticks each item of homework when completed.

Parents will be informed of any concerns with regard to their child's homework by direct contact from the child's teacher or by a note in the homework journal. Please check with your child 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 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 class work) 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 of it.
- If the time being spent on homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time.

When should homework be done?

Each family situation is different when it comes to organising homework - both parents may be working, pupils go to child minders, etc. Ideally, homework should be done shortly after school finishes. 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.

Review and Ratification

This policy was initially drawn up by the Principal and Staff and was ratified by the Board of Management in April 2014, It was reviewed in May 2015, April 2018 and May 2021 and was ratified by the Board of Management on 16th June 2021.

This policy will be reviewed in May 2025.

Signed *Teresa Gallagher*

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 16th June 2021