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Homework is important and valuable in children's education.

Our approach is: *"As little homework as necessary, completed as well as possible."*

## Homework Policy

This Policy aims to explain the purpose of homework, outline a whole-school approach to homework, and describe the roles and responsibilities of pupils, parents/guardians, and teachers at each class level.

The Department of Education does not issue guidelines relating to homework, and it is a matter for each school to prepare a homework policy in consultation with all stakeholders. This policy draws on the findings of research commissioned by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, and was completed in consultation with teaching staff, parents and pupils and approved by the Board of Management.<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Purpose of Homework

The purpose of homework is to consolidate, extend, and promote independent learning, to monitor individual students' and class progress, and to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning (Department of Education 2007).

Homework represents an important link between home and school, and is an opportunity to develop a practical partnership between parents and teachers, promoting continuity in learning between home and school.

Homework provides teachers with the opportunity to observe how well children have understood content taught in class, how they work independently, and assess their progress on an on-going basis.

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<sup>1</sup> Martinez Sainz, G. *et al* (2023) 'Curriculum and Assessment in Children's School Lives: Experiences from primary schools in Ireland 2019-2023' UCD School of Education, Dublin Report No. 6.

Homework also engages parents as active participants in their child's education, provides an insight into what is being taught at school, and gives parents a sense of how their children are progressing.

From the child's perspective, homework is a time to practise and reinforce work done in class, reflect on experiences and knowledge acquired during the school day, and communicate about their learning. Through establishing a homework routine children build independent study skills, self-reliance, and the ability to direct their own learning and use non-school resources.

## **2. Whole-school Approach to Homework**

Homework should have a specific purpose linked to school learning. Homework will regularly contain reading, spellings, tables, written work, material to be 'learned by heart', drawing or colouring, collecting information/items, research or project work, and finishing work started in class.

For example, while infant classes may be asked to complete word recognition activities or practise reading, rather than written work, older children may work on open-ended, project-based tasks in a range of subjects. Particularly as children get older, teachers may introduce some level of choice related to homework to promote independence and maintain interest. Homework may also be thematised throughout the year to reflect particular seasons or interests. For children with special educational needs, homework may be differentiated as appropriate and given by the class teacher and/or SET.

Homework plays a valuable role in mastering reading, tables, and spellings, and it is vital such 'non-written' work is completed thoroughly.

**"As little as is necessary, done as well as possible."**

While homework has a key role in a child's education it should not be excessively burdensome. Consideration is given to the need for family time, extra-curricular activities and hobbies, outdoor play, and other commitments.

Where possible, teachers should allow a degree of flexibility by assigning homework on a weekly basis, allowing children to decide when the work is completed. In addition, the number of books and materials children carry should be limited where possible to enable children to walk/cycle to and from school.

At Scoil Asicus Naofa, homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays but not on Fridays with certain exceptions:

- If homework has been neglected during the week.
- In senior classes some project work may be undertaken at weekends.

Occasionally, at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given 'homework off' as a treat or to acknowledge a special occasion.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Board of Management**

- To review this policy on a regular basis.

#### **Principal**

- To ensure this policy is applied consistently throughout the school.

#### **Teachers**

- To give relevant, meaningful and varied homework tasks.
- To explain homework tasks clearly and monitor taking down of homework.
- To set homework which can be attempted within a reasonable time frame.

Junior / Senior Infants:	5-10 minutes
1st / 2nd classes:	15 - 20 minutes
3rd / 4th classes:	20 – 25 minutes
5th / 6th classes:	25 – 30 minutes
- To check homework and provide feedback in a timely manner. NB. Some homework may be checked by children themselves, under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful learning opportunity.
- To encourage children by recognising their effort and achievement. They may give a reward for good homework completion (e.g. Class dojo point)
- To follow up on incomplete or poorly completed work.
- To identify and address difficulties children are having with homework tasks.
- To welcome communication from parents regarding how long homework is taking, and work with individual families experiencing difficulties.
- To support parents by recommending resources to assist with, for example, literacy, numeracy and Gaeilge on request.

#### **Parents/Guardians**

- To encourage a positive attitude towards homework from an early age.
- To provide sufficient time and a suitable work environment free from distractions, interruptions, and screens.
- To ensure their child does homework to the best of their ability including neat presentation.
- To supervise, provide assistance, and individual attention as required. Homework should be fully supervised up to 2nd class. In the senior classes, children should be able to complete the homework themselves but parents should check it to see it has been done fully and to the best of their ability.
- To listen to children reading and show an interest in their reading.
- To provide help with the learning of tables and spellings.

- To observe children's abilities and areas of difficulty.
- To encourage children to work independently as far as possible. Resist over-helping.
- To encourage children to find and correct their own mistakes or try a different method or approach.
- To respond when opportunities present themselves to fill gaps in learning.
- To help guide independent research activity.
- To sign the homework journal daily (where used) having checked that all homework is complete.
- To inform the teacher through their homework journal / Aladdin if a child cannot complete their homework for any reason.

### **Pupils**

Junior / Senior Infants:	teacher records homework
1st – 6th classes:	teacher records homework or pupils copy homework from board.

- To record the homework accurately in their journal when asked.
- To ensure they take home relevant books and copies. Where materials are left in school pupils should find out the homework from another child and complete it in a spare copy or page.
- To complete both written and non-written assignments to the best of their ability.
- To present work neatly.
- To communicate any problems with homework to their parent/guardian or teacher.

### **Problems with Homework**

- If you notice a problem with your child's homework – for example, they have difficulty with a particular aspect of it or are unable to complete it in the time allocated – you should alert your child's teacher as soon as possible by a note in their homework journal or via Aladdin.
- If homework is regularly incomplete a teacher will contact parents with a view to resolving the situation. If the situation continues, the matter will be brought to the attention of the principal who will contact parents and arrange a meeting to discuss how the matter can be resolved.

### **Homework when Absent**

- Where children are absent from school due to illness, they are not required to complete homework on those days.
- Teachers will not prepare programmes of homework for pupils whose parents take them out of school for holidays / travel during term time.

- In exceptional circumstances, where a child is unavoidably absent from school due to illness, injury or hospitalisation, a teacher will prepare homework in consultation with parents.

Drafted by Joseph Fogarty

Feedback from staff and parents

Feedback from student council

Reviewed & Ratified by Board of Management

To be reviewed

Jan and Feb 2025

March 2025

11<sup>th</sup> March 2025

2030

Signed:



Chairperson, Board of Management.