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Homework Policy



Introductory Statement

This policy was reviewed by staff team at Mary, Mother of Hope J.N.S in 2021. Suggested amendments were presented to a core group of Staff and to representatives of the Parent Association later that month. Further amendments were made following these consultations. It was ratified by the Board of Management at it's meeting in June 2021

Rationale

This policy was drawn up in order to have a consistent approach to homework amongst the teachers in the school and as a way of effectively communicating the school's approach to homework to parents.

Content

Why give Homework?

- To reinforce what the child learns during the day & to enhance pupil learning by consolidating the work that is done in school.
- To enhance children's study and concentration skills and to promote a good work ethic.
- To encourage positive home-school links.

How often is homework given?

- Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given a night off homework as a treat or reward or as acknowledgment of some special occasion. This may be on a whole school/class basis or as individual reward e.g Homework Pass or Birthday
- A homework assignment is posted on each class on Seesaw every Monday and children are required to respond by Wednesday of that week.



What is the content of homework?

- Homework is meant to be achievable by a child, i.e. it provides an opportunity to practise work already done. The work given will always represent a reinforcement of the work already covered in class.
- Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their individual ability - no more, no less. Children will be given homework which is suitable to their ability level. Teachers will ensure the work is differentiated to ensure that all levels of ability are catered for within each individual class. For children who attend Learning Support priority should be given to the homework assigned by the Learning Support teacher.
- Over the course of a week, homework will ideally contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks, written tasks and Mathematics. Homework will contain a balance of work each day e.g. some oral work, some written work, some reading. Homework will cover a wide variety of the curricular subjects e.g. Gaeilge, PE, SPHE, SESE etc.....
- Certain times throughout the year topics of a sensitive nature are taught in the SPHE programme. Parents are informed of these lessons prior to the teaching. Follow up home/school links are sent home after each lesson. We would encourage parents to read these and discuss with their child/children any thoughts they may have on the topics covered.
- It should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.
- 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.
- Each Thursday, children following the Grow in Love programme will have a religion related activity for homework.

How much time should be spent on homework tasks?

The following are guidelines for time spent on 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	10/15 minutes
Senior Infants	15/20 minutes
First Class	Up to a maximum of 25 minutes
Second Class	Up to a maximum of 30 minutes

First & Second Class Suggested Plan

Monday	Parallel Reader Spelling Tables Reading Comprehension/Cloze Procedure/Grammar Exercise Maths Problem Solving activity Seesaw Assignment (for completion by Wednesday - Gaeilge, SPHE-Wellbeing /PE /SESE/IT/Music/Visual Art)
Tuesday	Parallel Reader Spelling Tables English/Irish Writing Written Maths Activity Gaeilge
Wednesday	Parallel Reader Spelling Tables Practical Maths English/Irish Writing One active task in one of SPHE- Wellbeing/PE/SESE/IT/Music/Visual Art
Thursday	Parallel Reader Spelling Tables Grow In Love English (Handwriting) One active task in one of SPHE- Wellbeing/PE/SESE/IT/Music/Visual Art

Class reader will be sent home once completed in class 3/4 times a year



Suggested Content of Homework at Each Class Level

Please note these are suggested guidelines only. Teachers at each Class Level decide on Homework to be assigned each week in line with our Homework Policy

Junior Infants - Suggested Plan	
Monday	Parallel Reader Jolly Phonics -42 Sounds, Blending, Tricky Words English Written task (Handwriting/Dictation) Seesaw Assignment (for completion by Wednesday - Gaeilge, SPHE-Wellbeing /PE /SESE/IT/Music/Visual Art)
Tuesday	Parallel Reader Jolly Phonics -42 Sounds, Blending, Tricky Words Practical Maths Activity Maths Written task
Wednesday	Parallel Reader Jolly Phonics -42 Sounds, Blending, Tricky Words English Written task One active task in one of SPHE-Wellbeing/PE/SESE/IT/Music/Visual Art
Thursday	Parallel Reader Jolly Phonics -42 Sounds, Blending, Tricky Words Grow In Love Practical Maths One active task in one of SPHE-Wellbeing/PE/SESE/IT/Music/Visual Art

Senior Infants - Suggested Plan	
Monday	Parallel Reader Jolly Phonics -42 Sounds, Blending, Tricky Words English Written task (Handwriting/Dictation/Comprehension) Seesaw Assignment (for completion by Wednesday - Gaeilge, SPHE-Wellbeing /PE /SESE/IT/Music/Visual Art)
Tuesday	Parallel Reader Jolly Phonics -42 Sounds, Blending, Tricky Words Practical Maths Activity Maths Written task (Maths)
Wednesday	Parallel Reader Jolly Phonics -42 Sounds, Blending, Tricky Words English Written task One active task in one of SPHE-Wellbeing/PE/SESE/IT/Music/Visual Art
Thursday	Parallel Reader Jolly Phonics -42 Sounds, Blending, Tricky Words Grow in Love Practical Maths One active task in one of SPHE-Wellbeing/PE/SESE/IT/Music/Visual Art

How much help should parents give?

Parents should try to help their children with homework by:

- Becoming familiar with the schools Homework Policy which is also available on the school's website www.hopejns.com
- providing them with a suitable space and time to do their homework. The space chosen should have adequate lighting and appropriate furniture. Resources such as pencils, colours, and scissors should be easily available.
- Remember also that children find it difficult to concentrate on an empty stomach.
- There should be minimal disruption for your child. Parents should try to prevent interruptions or distractions from T.V. or other children
- Children should do written homework themselves and parents should only help when the child has difficulty. The finished product does not have to be perfect. It should reflect a genuine and reasonable effort by the child.
- 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. If the child is still unable to complete the task the parent should write a note to the teacher explaining the problem.
- We regularly send home Bookworm books to Junior and Senior Infants. This is not homework in the regular sense and it is simply meant to be an enjoyable exercise between parent and child with the aim of encouraging a love of reading. If it is not enjoyable, shared reading should not be done.
- Parallel reading is more formal in nature and children should be able to attempt to read some of the text. Parents should inform teacher if books are either too easy or too challenging for the child.
- It is essential that books taken home from school for parallel reading and Bookworm are returned to school each week in order for these programmes to run effectively.
- To ensure effective monitoring of homework and to maintain the link between home and school, parents are asked to sign their child's homework on a daily basis.

- If, on occasion, you find that your child is having difficulty in completing homework, or is spending much more time than recommended on a homework activity, parents are advised to:
 - Stop the homework activity, if the child is becoming upset
 - Write a brief note/email to the child's teacher stating the amount of time spent on the activity
 - Reassure your child that they have done enough for the day and put the homework back in the school bag.



How often should parents monitor homework?

- Parents should check and sign a child's homework every evening.
- If the child completes homework with a Childminder or in Crèche parents should make an effort to check that their child's homework has been completed to an adequate standard
- Please check that your child records their homework neatly on the correct page and ticks each item of homework when completed.

How often do teachers monitor homework?

- Teachers correct homework each week and homework journals are checked regularly at 1st and 2nd class.
- Some items of homework (and classwork) may be checked by children themselves or a classmate 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?

- If children have not been able to complete their homework due to circumstances beyond their control.
- When your child cannot do homework because she/he cannot understand some aspect of the work.
- 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 - maybe both parents are working or children attend a crèche or childminder. Ideally, homework should be done soon after school while your child is still fresh. However, some children need a break before starting homework.
- Parents should check their child's homework every evening.
- It is important that each family establishes the routine that works best for them.

Remember

If homework is a stressful experience between parent and child, something is wrong! This leads to poor learning and defeats the whole purpose of the exercise. Should this happen on a regular basis, please contact your child's teacher.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis

