



Scoil San Treasa Board of Management



The Rise, Mount Merrion, Co. Dublin A94EK75

Homework Policy

Introductory Statement and Rationale

This homework policy was reviewed and revised during the 2023-2024 academic year. The revision followed a consultation process involving teachers, pupils, parents, and the Board of Management - through parent surveys, pupil focus groups, and staff meeting discussions.

The purpose of our homework policy is to provide clarity to the whole school community regarding the purpose of homework and the expectation at each class level.

Of particular relevance are the values placed on high academic achievement, the importance of social, personal, and moral development, and the role of parents as primary educators, as outlined in our mission statement.

At Scoil San Treasa, our mission is the provision of primary education of the highest quality for all our pupils in a happy, safe, Christian environment. While we value high academic achievement, the social, personal and moral development of our pupils is of primary importance and we view the school as a learning organisation which is open to change and innovation while it cherishes the best educational, cultural and religious traditions of our society. Acknowledging that their parents are the primary educators of our children, we are inspired by a shared vision of excellence and we espouse a partnership approach in its pursuit.

Why does my child get homework?

Children get homework so that they can:

- Practise and reinforce the work already done in class
- Work independently, develop self-discipline and cultivate a good work ethic
- Avail of opportunities to use non-school resources (parents and others, library, environment, practical materials, media and internet) in an appropriately supervised fashion
- Explore additional opportunities to develop their learning further in areas of exceptional ability and/or specific learning needs
- Share and discuss their schoolwork with parents, providing daily opportunities for parents to monitor and support their progress. This is fundamental in engaging parents as partners in their child's education.

What type of homework should be expected?

- Homework will come in many forms, reflecting the multi-faceted nature of how children learn. It may consist of reading, oral, aural, written, memorisation, mental and/or practical work or physical tasks.
- In 3rd to 6th class, students typically receive daily tasks in Gaeilge, English and Mathematics. Additionally, work in other subject areas may be assigned in order to complement classroom learning. For infants to 2nd class, subjects will be introduced gradually on a phased basis.
- Reading practice (*including reading aloud*) is a priority for all children. This serves to develop fundamental literacy skills during the crucial primary school years, helps to foster good comprehension and critical thinking skills, furthers learning in cross curricular ways and lays the foundation for a wonderful lifelong pastime and interest.
- Spellings/reading/tables should generally be practiced every day from Monday to Thursday. SPHE homework will be sent home every Tuesday and should be signed by a parent or guardian.
- At each class level, teachers will collaborate in prescribing homework which reinforces class learning or covers elements of the curriculum being taught. As a general rule, teachers at the same level will adopt a similar approach.
- Teachers may adapt the setting of homework to suit the needs of their class. (*e.g. give all homework at the beginning of the week*) and at busy times of the year/special occasions may vary the amount of homework assigned.

- Occasionally there may be work assigned which will take the form of a project; research, model making, drafting & redrafting stories or articles which may be completed over a longer period of time. This type of approach has many benefits, including developing planning and time management skills.
- Homework will be corrected in a timely manner. Various methods of correcting homework are used. (*e.g. teacher correction, whole class, paired correction, class discussion*) with appropriate feedback provided.
- Teachers may differentiate homework in individual circumstances. By agreement with parents, supplementary assignments/activities may be given for children with specific learning needs/exceptional ability.
- Parents may help in explaining or support a child's homework; however, if the child is unable to complete the assigned work, this should be communicated to the class teacher in a timely manner.

How much time should my child spend on homework? *

The suggested guidelines for time spent on homework assignments by each class level are as follows:

- Junior Infants/Senior Infants: 15-20 minutes with parents.
- First Class: 20-30 minutes with parent
- Second Class: 30-40 minutes with parent
- Third Class: 30-40 minutes.
- Fourth Class: 40 minutes approximately
- Fifth Class: 50 minutes approximately
- Sixth Class: 60 minutes approximately

Usually, homework is assigned on the following days: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday...with Friday being free of homework. However, specific reading tasks (short) are regularly assigned to some of the infant/junior classes over the weekend – in a bid to optimise the child's potential for literacy learning at this key stage of early/emerging reading skills. Approaching such tasks in a positive and relaxed fashion has many far-reaching benefits for your child. Additionally, all parents are advised to encourage their children to read generally in the course of the weekend. Remember: reading to your child can be very beneficial also.

*It is important to note that these are suggested target times. In practice, the time taken will depend on the individual child. Please consult with your child's class teacher if you have a query/concern in this regard. If the homework appears to be taking over and above the time guidelines, you may choose to allow your child to do what they can on that day within the suggested timeframe and then write a brief note in the child's homework journal for the teacher's attention.

How can parents/guardians help?

We encourage parents to support their children in doing their homework by:

- Make sure the child is not hungry or very tired when starting on homework. Provide a snack and or rest before expecting the child to start homework.
- Have a specific time and place for homework. Bear this in mind when planning other activities for your child. Stick to this routine consistently and explain it to the child. If necessary, use the clock to show how long the homework will take. Ensure that your child has a quiet environment in which to work. TV/PlayStation/various devices etc. should be switched off.
- Providing suitable materials, such as pens, rulers, number lines, and ICT tools as required
- Be nearby in case of questions; be there to hear and support reading and to discuss the content
- Acknowledge and respect effort, honesty and enthusiasm.
- Acknowledge that your child will make mistakes and encourage them to check back over their work and to find and correct their own mistakes. Making mistakes is part of the learning process.
- Depending on your child's age/needs, it may be helpful to have some supports available. For example, a pre-written alphabet, a number line (on card) at hand e.g. attached to the table. Provide counters/money for math work where necessary. A 'mind map' may be of help when planning assignments.

- For writing exercises, if your child is becoming frustrated, give help with writing the beginning of the sentence and encourage them to finish, or write some words and encourage them to fill in the blanks.
- Help your child to check back over his/her written work.
- For children with attention/reading difficulties, consider breaking homework into chunks with brief movement breaks.
- Monitoring and signing homework daily
- Regularly checking the memorisation of spellings and tables
- Keep the teacher informed of difficulties that your child may be having with homework, particularly if the homework seems to take a long time or if the child often has difficulty in certain areas.
- Taking good care of school-provided books and using the provided tuff bags
- Checking their child's school bag regularly to ensure that it is not overloaded with unnecessary items
- Additionally, parents support their child's learning by assisting them in editing projects, such as book-writing or large-scale creative writing projects

Miscellaneous Notes

- Following consultation with the parent body and the school community, a practice was established in the school whereby the SPHE scrapbook normally goes home with each child on a Tuesday evening. This affords parents and children an opportunity to engage with matters relating to Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) together on a weekly basis. The child is permitted to keep the scrapbook at home until the following Monday if the parent so wishes, thus affording parent and child to have a relaxed discussion about a particular SPHE item in the course of the weekend. This initiative has proved popular to date. Please remember to sign and date the scrapbook each week.
- All children in infants, first class and second class are required to have a 'tuff-bag' (a type of zipped plastic folder - check with the office or class teacher if unsure about this). We are fortunate to have a large bank of supplementary and parallel reading material for pupils at this level. So that the borrowing, recording and maintenance of these resources will run as smoothly as possible, these books are brought to and from school in the child's tuff-bag.
- Parents are encouraged to check their child's school bag regularly to ensure that it is not overloaded with unnecessary items. A frequent 'tidy-out' of the bag will help ensure that the bag does not get too heavy.
- Ideally, teachers like to check homework on a daily basis. However, with large class numbers and a busy school day, it is not always possible to fully check all aspects of a child's homework each day. As children get older and learn to work independently, some items are checked less often. Some items of homework (and classwork) may be checked by children themselves under the direction of the teacher. This can sometimes be a useful part of the learning process for children.
- Parents are encouraged to support their child's learning by assisting them in editing projects such as book-writing or large-scale creative writing projects and in managing time with regard to co-curricular/extracurricular pursuits.

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated as needs change and emerge, in line with Department of Education policies and curricular developments.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 23rd September 2024.

Eoin O'Neill - Chairperson of Board of Management, Scoil San Treasa

Frances Mullin - Principal, Scoil San Treasa