

**St. Mary's Primary School
and Nursery Unit, Killyclogher**



Homework Policy

Rationale

In St. Mary's Primary School, we believe that homework supports, extends and consolidates the learning covered in the classroom while supporting children to develop self-discipline, independence and the ability to take responsibility for their own learning.

We see homework as being a valuable link between home and school, where parents can be involved positively in their child's education. As children progress through the school, more will be expected of them in content and in the length of time spent on work at home. Through the implementation of this Homework Policy, we set out to raise achievement, ensure a consistency of approach throughout the school and ensure teachers, parents and guardians have a clear, shared understanding about expectations of pupils.

Aims

- To consolidate, reinforce and extend the skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the classroom.
- To assist with the development of an effective partnership between school and home, maintaining good channels of communication for the benefit of each child.
- To give parents/guardians insight into their child's learning in school and so involve them in their educational development.
- To offer pupils the opportunity to extend their learning by occasionally including optional, additional challenges or open ended questions.
- To encourage pupils to develop the skill, confidence and motivation to study independently at home effectively.

General Approach

It is vital for the pupils that there is consistency in the approach to setting homework throughout the school and also between the classes in each year group. As a result, the following is normally the case when setting homework:

- Homework will normally be based on work already covered in class or related to work covered in class.
- The same type of work will be set for the whole class, although it may vary in level of difficulty depending on the ability of the child.
- Teachers of year groups will work together to ensure a consistency of approach.
- The amount and frequency of homework will increase as a pupil gets older.
- Homework will not necessarily be in the form of a written task.

The Nature of Homework

It should be noted that homework can be set in many different forms with many different expectations and outcomes. Homework normally consists of a combination of:

- Reading;
- Phonics/spellings;
- Mathematical facts/tables/mental arithmetic activities;
- Written activity (Normally Literacy, Numeracy or topic-based)

On occasions a written activity may not be set as the homework may include research activities, preparation for class talks/'show and tell' etc.

There may be occasions when no homework is set e.g. individual pupil reward, class reward or in light of a special event happening.

Homework, generally, will be set each day from Monday to Thursday. The nature and amount of work to be completed at home will depend on the age and ability of the child. All homework tasks and activities will have a clear purpose and assist pupils in the progress of their academic development. Parents should assist pupils to access and upload work to TEAMS until pupils can do so independently.

Approximate time suggested for the completion of homework activities across the school

Year 1	15-20 minutes
Year 2	20-30 minutes
Year 3	25-30 minutes
Year 4	30-45 minutes
Year 5	30-45 minutes
Year 6	45-60 minutes
Year 7	45-60 minutes

Role of the Teacher

- Teachers will explain homework tasks so that children understand how to complete them.
- The amount and difficulty of homework will be tailored by the teacher according to the child's age and ability.
- Teachers will ensure that homework tasks are differentiated, purposeful and aimed at developing and consolidating basic skills.
- Teachers will provide clear reminders of their expectations when it comes to homework, for example, through the Year Group Newsletter or at Parent/Teacher Meetings.
- Teachers will inform parents/guardians if children are regularly failing to complete homework.
- Homework will be marked as soon as possible and in line with the school's 'Marking and Feedback Policy'.

Role of the Parent/Guardian

The school recognises that parents and guardians have a key role to play in supporting pupils through their praise and encouragement. For much of homework, particularly with younger children, parents and guardians will be encouraged to become actively involved. The nature of this role will change as children get older.

Parents/guardians should:

- provide a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which their child can do their homework, preferably with an adult to discuss, encourage and support;
- take an interest in the homework being undertaken;
- help children understand the value of homework;
- encourage their child to complete the homework to the best of their ability and return it to school on time;
- give support and help but do not do the work for the children;
- always praise the child's effort in completing homework;
- write initials on written homework and/or child's homework diary/activity sheet;
- inform a child's teacher if their child is experiencing persistent difficulties with the completion of homework tasks;
- sign unfinished homework if the activity is taking too long to complete and longer than the suggested time.

Inclusion and Homework

Setting the right type and amount of homework for children with special educational needs needs careful consideration by the class teacher.

The objectives of homework outlined in this policy should apply equally to pupils with special educational needs (SEN). While children with SEN may benefit from special tasks separate from the homework set for other children in the class, it is important that they should do as much in common with the other children as possible.

Homework tasks for children with SEN should:

- Give plenty of opportunities for pupils to succeed;
- Have a very clear focus and time-guideline;
- Be varied – and not purely written assignments;
- Help develop social as well as other skills where necessary;
- Be manageable for teachers.

Use of ICT

Child safety is paramount in all matters regarding use of the internet and we advise parents and guardians to always supervise their child's access to the internet should he/she be using technology to research a homework topic or to complete work on TEAMS or other platform identified for use by school.

(A copy of the school's E-Safety Policy is available from the school office).

Monitoring and Review

In order to ensure that our Homework Policy directly contributes to the quality of teaching and learning, the provision of homework will be regularly monitored by the Principal and/or the Literacy and Numeracy Co-ordinators. Parents will also be given opportunities to share their views with teachers at parent consultations and other occasions, as appropriate.

The Homework Policy will be reviewed every three years. Where significant changes to the policy are felt to be required, proposals will be presented to the governing body and parents will be consulted.