

Homework Policy

Homework is an integral link in the chain of communication between school and home. Parents can monitor the progress of their children through continual reference to Homework diaries and liaison with teachers. This policy attempts to further strengthen positive home-school links through streamlining the processes involved. The homework policy of St. Anthony's School has been formulated by staff, approved by parents and endorsed by the Board of Management in 2010. It has been reviewed by staff in January 2014.

Rationale

A comprehensive Homework policy ensures

- Further strengthening of home-school links
- Reinforcing the learning experienced by the child during the school day
- Clarity as to the recommended amount or time to be spent on homework

Relationship to School Ethos

It is the policy of the school to, as far as is possible, identify all the needs of the pupil and put in place measures to adequately cater for their needs.

The school also encourages the active involvement of parents in enabling their child to take responsibility and work independently. The homework policy of the school facilitates these ideals.

Aims and Objectives

The primary objectives of the policy are -

- To consolidate learning through reinforcement of class work
- To enable the children develop a sense of responsibility and independence in their own work
- To develop a child's concentration skills and foster a work ethic
- To promote consistency and a uniform approach to homework across all classes
- To further develop links between home and school

Policy Content

It is school policy that **homework is meant to be achievable by the child** as it provides opportunity to **practice work already done**. Good study habits are fostered, independent learning is promoted and self-discipline is developed. Homework is normally prepared by the teacher in the class and given during the school day. Some classes are given homework for the week which is then checked by the teacher at the end of the week. Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their individual ability - no more, no less. The following guidelines apply to homework for all children.

- Homework is generally based on class related work or work already covered in class. It should contain a balance between reading, learning and writing. Time devoted to reading and learning is just as important as written work.
- The assigned homework is explained to children in advance. The different levels of the pupils are also taken into account.
- Homework is given from Mondays to Thursdays and generally is not given at weekends.
- Homework is not linked to behaviour but occasionally children are rewarded with reduced homework if they have worked /behaved very well.
- It is not school policy to issue homework as an exercise in isolation. It will in most instances be an integral part of the subject being taught and be consistent.
- Reading is routinely given as homework and should be accorded priority consideration.
- If homework causes stress or worry to the child, parents are encouraged to convey these anxieties to the class teacher. If homework cannot be completed on a particular night, parents are asked to forward a written note.
- Teachers like to check homework on a daily basis. However, though homework is checked, written corrections are not always possible. When appropriate teachers may have to correct homework when time is available.
- Some homework may be self correcting. Some items of homework are corrected by the children under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process. Children who do not complete homework satisfactorily may be required to re do this work during lunch break. Parents are advised to supervise and check homework nightly.
- All children have a homework diary which parents are required to sign. The homework diary acts as a means of communication between class teacher and parent.

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- "Homework off" may be given at a teachers discretion. In general, all school homework will encompass a wide spectrum of learning experiences such as reading, writing, tables, spelling, learning 'by heart', drawing, collecting information, colouring and finishing class work.

How much (time) should be given to homework:

The following are guidelines as to what type of homework is given and different children will complete the same homework in different lengths of time.

It is quality rather than quantity of homework that is important.

Junior Classes (4 - 10 years)	Finishing work started in school, some reading, maybe some writing, maths, or other item of work.
Middle Classes (11 - 15 years)	Finishing work started in school or reviewing work done in school, always some reading, may include some writing, maths, SPHE tasks, spellings or tables.
Senior Classes (16 - 18 Years)	SPHE, Research, Social Skills Practice sheets, may include reading, writing or maths practical worksheets or discussion sheets to complete with parents.

How Parents can support their child with Homework:

1. Provide suitable comfortable facilities and time to do the work.
2. Remove or try to prevent distractions - T.V. younger siblings etc.
3. Help child overcome difficulties through explanation but ...
4. Parents should not do the homework for their children.
5. Send a note to the class teacher if a problem arises. This can be done through the homework diary.
6. Check and sign homework diaries.
7. NB: Notify the class teacher if time spent on homework seems excessive.
8. As children tire towards late evening, encourage the completion of homework as early as possible.
9. Discourage morning homework.
10. Parents should have a stock of rulers, pencils, rubbers, table books etc. available should the need arise.

***NB* When should parents communicate with the teachers about homework?**

1. When a child cannot do homework due to family circumstances
2. When a child cannot do homework because s/he cannot understand it
3. If the time spent at homework is excessively long and the child gets tired and frustrated

St. Anthony's School Policies & Procedures

4. If homework is causing stress between the parents and the child.

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 teacher.

Evaluation

- In-class corrections
- Checking homework diaries
- Parent - Teacher meetings
- Teacher designed tests
- Pupil profiling
- Teacher observation
- Feedback from parents and pupils
- General air of satisfaction

Roles and Responsibilities / Implementation

All stakeholders have a role to play in the implementation of this policy from pupils / parents right up to Board of Management.

This policy has been in operation in the school since September 2010. It was reviewed at a Teachers meeting in January 2014 and revised as above.

Ratification / Communication

The policy was approved by parents through a survey where 99% parents who responded accepted the policy as stated and it was then ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on 2nd April 2014.

Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended regularly.

References

The Essential Parents Guide to the Primary school years. -
Your Child in the Primary school
Your Child's Learning

Brian Gilsean
- I.N.T.O
- D.E.S. Primary School Curriculum