



St. Louise de Marillac Primary School

Homework Policy

Introductory Statement

The following points are a blending of the two policies from the former Junior and Senior schools, based on previous collaboration between a group of parents and teachers.

Rationale

It is necessary to review the homework policy at this time because:

- The practice of doing homework was well established within both schools
- Our recently amalgamated school continues to recognise the value and need for homework
- We want to promote a similar approach to homework across all classes
- While endeavouring to increase co-operation between parents and teachers in this regard, a strong focus will be placed on recognising and responding to the needs of all pupils.

We consider that homework is valuable for the following reasons:

1. It reinforces work done during the day in school.
2. It provides an opportunity for pupils to practise and to work at their own pace.
3. It helps the pupil to work independently.
4. It keeps parents up to date on their child's schoolwork.
5. It provides good training - helps the pupil to establish good discipline/routine.
6. It helps to support study skills and prepares the pupil for the longer study sessions that they will need to do at post-primary level.
7. For older pupils in particular, it helps them to focus and to manage a balance between study and leisure time.
8. It helps to strengthen links between home and school.

How School Helps Pupils to Organise their Homework

- Junior Infants will generally get homework after the Hallowe'en mid-term break; this will be in a zipped mesh/plastic homework folder that they take home daily. This folder should be kept for Senior Infants also.
- Each pupil in Senior Infants has a homework folder (kept from Junior Infants) and the homework that is assigned is in this folder each day.
- Each pupil from 1st to 6th class has a homework journal into which he/she writes her homework list each day.

An acceptable standard of presentation is important in this homework journal.

The class teacher and/or learning support/resource teacher (where applicable) tries to ensure that:

- the instructions concerning homework are clear to everyone
- pupils have enough time to copy down the list of homework (perhaps specific time of day allotted) and to pack school bags with books that are necessary for that evening

- homework is corrected and commented on by the teacher
- there is a fair level of consistency with regard to correction/marking/grading (if applicable) of homework.

Responsibilities of Pupils in Relation to Homework

The children should:

- Take down homework carefully
- Take home the appropriate books
- Try their best to do all assigned homework
- Ask for adult help if they require it
- Replace all books, copies, etc in schoolbag and remove any item not necessary for school next day.

How Parents/Guardians Help with Homework

- Have snack/meal ready for children after school before he/she settles down to homework
- Establish a routine that is followed daily, except in very rare instances
- Allocate a specific time for homework shortly after school
- Allocate a specific place to do homework, preferably where parent(s) can keep a supervisory eye
- Make sure that the T.V. is off and there is as little distraction as possible
- Check your child's journal and schoolbag for any notes/communication from teacher/school
- The homework should be guided by an adult
- For older children, help the child to organise her time to best advantage so that items of homework are not left to the last minute, rushed or forgotten
- Check that the homework is completed. Perhaps examine spellings/tables. Listen to reading. Ask word meanings. Discuss worksheets and maths problems.
- Sign the journal when you are satisfied that homework is done to the best of your child's ability.
- Let the teacher know if there are any problems with regard to homework by writing about the nature of the difficulty in the journal, e.g. if a child has no understanding of the concept, if homework is taking significantly longer than the recommended time. The teacher can help to identify the source of the difficulty if the child's efforts are produced in school the next day. This is more helpful to the teacher than a blank page.
- Ensure that your child replaces all books, copies, worksheets, stationery in schoolbag and removes any item that is not necessary for school next day.
- On evenings when no homework is assigned and at weekends and holiday time, get involved in other educational activities with your child appropriate to his/her age: read storybooks, join/visit the library, watch educational programmes/films together, play quiz and board games, visit educational institutions such as the zoo, museums and galleries.

Communication about Homework

- Parents receive information about homework and how they can help from time to time in the school newsletter and in the school information booklet.

- A specific sheet about maths is given to the parents of the children in 2nd class with regard to subtraction/renaming.
- Information meetings for groups of parents may be facilitated from time to time on specific topics, e.g. phonics for infants, maths for 5th class, etc.
- Homework is discussed with parents at the parent teacher meetings.

Checking Homework

- Teachers check that homework is completed on a daily basis.
- All homework is corrected over the course of the week.
- Credit is given for effort as well as achievement.

School Initiatives

- Depending on resources available, some children from 1st to 6th class may be invited to join a homework club facilitated by the School Completion Programme (SCP). This club incorporates a snack, homework and fun activities. Children who are finished homework early in the clubs are expected to engage in other learning activities that do not disturb those still completing homework. It is up to 50 minutes in duration and is run on a voluntary basis by the teachers in collaboration with the HSCL (Home School Community Liaison) teacher and School Completion Programme.
- Children who attend these clubs should continue to have their homework checked by their parents and ensure they have everything needed for school the next day.
- The HSCL teacher acts as a link between home and school and provides communication and support.
- Homework passes are occasionally given by the school/teachers as an incentive for individual achievement, e.g. perfect monthly attendance, Student of the Week. Pupils are allowed to use these passes to have an evening of their choice free from homework. Teachers may ask pupils to indicate before going home whether or not they will use his/her homework pass on a given evening.
- There may also be occasions when whole classes are not assigned homework, e.g. if they have been on a tour, class achievements in Green Schools initiative, etc. This fact will generally be recorded in place of assigned homework in their journals.

Nature of Homework

The suggested amount of time to spend and content of homework for each class grouping is set out in the table below:

| Class Groups | Junior Infants | Senior Infants | 1st & 2nd Class |
|---------------------|--|---|--|
| Time | 10 minutes | 10 minutes | 20 minutes |
| Content | Letter/number formation Story/library book to be read by parent Letter names, sounds and CVC words Reader Alive-O workbook | Pre-reading/early reading activities Story/library book to be read by parent Reader Regular Worksheets Alive-O workbook | English Reading (also Irish in 2 nd) Writing Spellings Tables Maths Alive-O text/worksheets |

| Class Groups | 3rd Class | 4th Class | 5th Class | 6th Class |
|---------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Time | 30 minutes | 30 minutes | 30-40 minutes | 30-40 minutes |
| Content | English and Irish Reading English and Irish Writing English and Irish Spellings Tables Maths Alive-O text/worksheets | English and Irish Reading/Poetry English and Irish Writing English and Irish Spellings Project/Research Tables Maths Alive-O text/worksheets | English and Irish Reading/Poetry English and Irish Writing English and Irish Spellings Project/Research Tables Maths Alive-O text/worksheets | English and Irish Reading/Poetry English and Irish Writing English and Irish Spellings Project/Research Tables Maths Alive-O text/worksheets |

The exact nature of the homework may vary, particularly in senior classes, depending on the current work/theme/project being undertaken in the classroom. Some project/maths/science work may be oral or practical in nature. It may also involve completing work that was not finished in school.

In relation to children with special education needs, they may be assigned differentiated homework from the Learning Support/Resource Teacher appropriate to their learning needs. They should do this homework as a priority as it is intended to specifically meet his/her needs.

Extra Considerations

1. No homework is assigned at weekends.
2. If a child does not complete homework in the suggested timeframe, the parent can decide whether or not to stop or to continue the homework. If parents are happy to stop, they should write a note (either positive or negative, depending on circumstances) to that effect in the child’s journal or on the worksheet. The teacher’s response will be guided by parent’s comment.
3. If for any reason a child has not done the homework, the child’s parent should send a note of explanation.

The following are suggestions for:

| Rewards for homework completed to a satisfactory standard | Sanctions for homework not completed or not completed to a satisfactory standard (with no written explanation from parent) |
|--|--|
| Positive comment by teacher Positive comment written home to parent Stars, stickers, stampers where appropriate Pick best of the week and they receive a prize Trip to principal’s office Recognition of good homework at school assembly | Ask child for an explanation Note home to parents Invite parents to the school to meet with teacher and/or principal Send to another class to complete homework Complete the homework the following the evening/at the weekend Parents might consider curtailing hobbies/leisure time activities if regularly interfering with completion of homework |

In the implementation of this policy, due recognition is given to the importance of understanding each individual child’s personal circumstances and there is flexibility on each teacher’s part in responding in a professional manner to a pupil’s individual needs at a particular time.

The Staff of St. Louise de Marillac Primary School has an agreed systematic cycle of review of policies whereby new policies are reviewed after one year and subsequently every three years.

In line with the above, this policy will be reviewed during the next academic year 2016-2017 and subsequently every three years, unless changes are required by legislation or other needs arise before then.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 28th January 2014.

Signature: _____
(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date: _____