



**Letterkenny
Educate Together
National School**
ag fás le chéile - ag foghlaim le chéile

Homework Policy

Aims and Rationale

Homework fosters independence, self-reliance, self-esteem, co-operation and responsibility and life-long learning. It is an essential part of primary education as it re-enforces what children learn in school. It provides a link between teacher and parent and encourages parental involvement in their child's education.

In general, homework is meant to be achievable by a child working on their own to the best of their ability. It is normally prepared by the teacher in class. It can be used to practice what is done in school or can be designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity. This policy for Letterkenny Educate Together has been adapted from official guidelines from the Primary Professional Development Service, (PPDS).

Why give homework?

- To reinforce the child's memory of what he/she has learned during the day.
- To provide a link between home and school
- To give opportunities for parents/guardians to learn more about their child's day at school
- To develop a child's concentration skills and develop a work ethic that will prepare them for the demands of secondary school and encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning
- Homework should be achievable for the child while allowing appropriate opportunities to challenge them and extend their learning
- Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their individual ability - no more, no less

How often is homework given?

Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays with certain exceptions:

- Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given 'homework off' as a treat or as acknowledgement of some special occasion.

Homework can be completed over the course of the week to allow for flexibility for families but must be fully completed and returned by Friday morning.

Homework Content

Usually, homework contains reading, spelling, maths and a literacy based activity. However, it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.

Homework can contain reading, spellings, tables, written work, pieces to be 'learned by heart', drawing/colouring, collecting information/items, research, project work and finishing work started in class. 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. When appropriate teachers will aim to allow flexibility when completing project work i.e. the method of presentation, focus of topic etc.

Duration of Homework

The following are guidelines for time spent at 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:

Infants	-	0-20 minutes
Rang 1 and 2	-	20 to 30 minutes
Rang 3 and 4	-	30 to 40 minutes
Rang 5 and 6	-	40 to 50 minutes

Pupils should:

- enter homework accurately in homework diary or folder.
- ensure they take home relevant books and copies.

- complete homework assignments to the best of their ability.
- present written work neatly.

Parents/Guardians should:

- Encourage a positive attitude towards homework in all subjects from an early age.
- Encourage children to work independently as far as possible. Resist over-helping.
- Encourage children to organise themselves for homework. Have all books and materials to hand.
- Agree a suitable time for doing homework, taking into account of age, the need for playtime, relaxation and family time.
- Providing a quiet place, suitable work surface, free from distractions, interruptions and T.V.
- Encourage good presentation and neatness within a reasonable time.
- Check that the child has all necessary books, homework journal, copies, pencils, mathematical equipment, dictionary, P.E. clothes, if needed for the next school day.
- Communicate difficulties to the teacher if needs be.

Teachers should

- Set homework, review assignments and provide feedback to students.
- Monitor homework to help identify pupils experiencing difficulties with homework

How often do teachers monitor homework?

Ideally, teachers check homework on a daily basis. However, with large class numbers, it is not always possible to check each child's homework journal every day. As children get older and learn to work independently, some items of homework are checked less often, e.g. every second day or once a week. Some items of homework (and class work) may be checked by children themselves, under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children as it promotes responsibility and self esteem.

Class based incentives for encouraging homework

The Class Teacher will keep a record for each child monitoring the return of completed homework for each week. After homework has been successfully returned an agreed number of times the child will earn a class based reward. This may include signing the Principal's book, extra playtime, extra golden time etc.

What happens when Homework is not done?

When homework is not completed, the child must do the homework that evening along with the current day's homework. If homework is not completed regularly, the teacher contacts parents with a view to resolving the situation. The teacher may assist the child to complete their homework on a Friday afternoon during *Golden Time* or at another appropriate time.

If the situation continues, then the matter is brought to the attention of the Principal who will contact the parent(s) and arrange a meeting to discuss how the matter can be resolved. As parents share the vision of learning in our school, further steps are rarely necessary. At all times, parents will be kept in touch with these matters.

Implementation Date

This policy will be implemented immediately from school and reviewed in 2018.

Ratification & Communication
