

Bennekerry National School

Homework Policy

Introduction: This policy was drawn up by staff members having consulted with the entire staff, pupils, parents and the Board of Management. It is rooted in the school's basic aim to assist students to develop their full potential in an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual respect and to encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning.

Rationale of Homework : Homework is an integral part of the learning process. Learning continues through the completion of homework.

1. Why give homework

- To re-inforce what the child learns during the day.
- To provide a link between teacher and parent.
- To develop a child's concentration skills and develop a work ethic.
- Homework is meant to be achievable by a child, i.e. it provides an opportunity to practice work already done. It is normally prepared by the teacher in class. However, sometimes with senior classes, some homework is designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity.
- Children are expected to do their homework to the **best of their ability** – no more, no less.

2. How often is homework given?

- Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays. There are two exceptions:
 - If homework has been neglected
 - In senior classes some project work may be completed at the weekends
- 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.
- Please note, extra homework may sometime be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not done homework, made a suitable effort or has presented untidy work.

3. What is the content of homework?

- Ideally homework will contain a **balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks.**
- This balance is not always possible and can vary considerably from day to day. However, it should be noted that **homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.**
- Homework will regularly contain reading, spelling, tables, written work, pieces to be "learned by heart", drawing/colouring, collecting information/items 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.

4. How much (time) homework?

The following are guidelines for time spent at homework. 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 only:

Junior Infants/ Senior Infants	10 – 15 minutes
Rang 1 / Rang 2	20 – 30 minutes
Rang 3/ Rang 4	30 – 45 minutes
Rang 5/Rang 6	45 mins -1 hour

Homework is given from Monday to Thursday. Normally there is no homework at weekends or on a school day just before a public holiday. Sometimes, particularly in the senior classes, a certain amount of homework may be allocated for the week and each pupil may decide for him/herself when he/she will complete the work. It is wisest not to leave it all until the last night and it is important that if they choose to do large quantities on any one given night, that it is still the best they can do and work that they are proud of. Progress can only be achieved in this way.

5. How much help should parents give?

- Parents should try to help their children with homework by:
 - Providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework
 - Preventing interruptions or distractions like, T.V., games consoles, access to mobile phones or social media or interference by other children.
- If a child has difficulty with homework, the parents should help the child overcome the difficulty with further explanations or examples, but not by actually doing the homework for the child.
- If the child continues to have difficulty, the parent should write a note to the teacher explaining the problem.
- Shared reading is not homework in the regular sense and it is simply meant to be an enjoyable exercise between parent and child.

6. How often should parents monitor homework?

- Parents should check homework and sign the child’s homework journal every evening.
- The pupil’s journal is an important record of the child’s homework. It is also a valuable means of communication between parents and teachers.
- Please check that your child records his/her homework neatly in the correct page and ticks each item of homework when completed. This includes reading, oral work and things to be learned.
- Letters to parents are folded and placed in the current day of the homework journal. Please check your child’s journal for such notes on a regular basis.

7. How often do teachers monitor homework?

- Ideally teachers like to 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 classwork) may be checked by children themselves under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children.

8. When should parents communicate with the teachers about homework?

- When your child cannot do homework due to family circumstances.
- When your child cannot do homework because she/he cannot understand some aspect.
- If the time spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time.

9. When should homework be done?

- Each family situation is different – both parents working, child minders etc. Ideally homework should be done soon after school while your child is still fresh. However, some children need a break before starting homework. Ideally, homework should not be left until morning time before school.

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, contact the class teacher.

Ratification and Communication:

This Board of Management officially ratified this policy on 23rd April 2018.

This policy will be available on request to all parents and will be posted on the school web-site.

Chairperson of the BOM: _____

Principal: _____

Date: _____

