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## **Homework Policy Scoil Bhríde 13910N**

### **Introductory Statement:**

This policy was prepared by the staff of Scoil Bhríde, closely following Department of Education/Science guidelines. It was sanctioned by the Board of Management in November 2017.

### **Rational**

This policy will strengthen the links between home and school and will involve the parents / guardians in the child's education.

### **Relationship to Ethos of School**

The mission statement of Scoil Bhríde is at the heart of our homework policy. Scoil Bhríde is an all girl's Primary School founded on the Presentation philosophy of Education and Catholic faith. We strive to proactively nurture and educate each child to her fullest potential and at every stage of her development. We believe in striking balance and we encourage the cultivation of strong relationships within the school and community.

### **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 practise 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 individual ability – no more, no less.

### **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 during the week
  - In senior classes some project work/Story writing is undertaken at weekends
- Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given "Homework off" as a treat or as acknowledgment of some special occasion eg Birthdays or special successes
- Please note extra homework may be sometime be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not done homework, made a suitable effort or presented untidy work.

## **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, spellings, 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.

## **Homework for above average pupils**

Above average people fall into three general groups, talented, superior and gifted. Talented pupils have above ordinary aptitude in special fields such as music, art, mathematics, design etc., but may only be rated as average on an overall intelligence test. Having a high capacity for training in their special fields, these pupils should be given advanced assignments in their area of ability. Members of the superior group are considerably above normal I.Q. range in most traits. They need challenging and stimulating homework. The gifted group, according to intelligence tests, constitutes approximately the upper 2% of the population. They are capable of outstanding achievement in at least one given field and often in several fields and of sustained concentration for long periods of time. They demonstrate originality, curiosity and resourcefulness and have perpetually questing minds.

Though all three types of brilliant students need special attention most teachers' time, because of large classes, is, of necessity focused on the middle and weaker groups. This problem can to some extent be overcome by the resourceful allocation of interesting projects and assignments. This might include providing for originality and creative contributions in the making of charts, maps, graphs, diagrams etc. in writing compositions, preparing reports, publishing a class or a school newspaper. It might also include extra reading, which would necessitate provision by the teacher of supplementary reading material (library books, an encyclopaedia, selected magazines). Language could be developed by requiring from such pupils' reports, both oral and written, on selected TV programmes and films. Such work would also encourage critical expression.

## **Homework for below average pupils**

Children with learning difficulties learn better through using concrete materials and by having relatively short assignments with repetition of simple facts and numerous illustrations. Because they are likely to require considerable individual assistance with homework it is important to set standards of achievement at the child's level. Do not assign the same quantity of homework to them as to the main body of the class. For instance, assign only the first five questions of a 15 – question exercise in grammar. Arrange for considerable practise with basic skills. Emphasise neatness and thoroughness in all they do.

## **How much time for 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 only:

Junior and Senior Infants	Up to 10 minutes
Rang 1/2	Up to 20 minutes
Rang 3/4	Up to 40 minutes
Rang 5/6	Up to 60 minutes

### **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
  - To prevent interruptions or distractions, like T.V. or other children
- Children should do written homework themselves and parents should only help when the child has difficulty
- If a child has difficulty with homework, the parents should help the child to overcome the difficulty with further explanation or examples, but not by actually doing the homework for the child. In this case 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. If it's not enjoyable, shared reading should not be done.

### **How often should parents monitor homework?**

- Parents must check and sign a 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
- Ideally, all written messages in relation to a child's homework should be put in the homework journal (additional pages available at the end of the journal)
- Please check that your child records his/her homework neatly in the correct page and ticks each item of homework when completed

### **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 per 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/self evaluation.

### **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 being spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time.

### **When should homework be done?**

- Each family situation is different - both parents working, child minders, etc. Ideally, homework should be done before any television is watched soon after school while your child is still fresh, however, some children need a break before starting homework
- Homework should never be left until morning time before school

### **Success Criteria**

This Policy Document will be assessed as to its effectiveness or otherwise in the following way by:

1. Teacher observation/feedback.
2. Parent feedback.
3. Pupil feedback when appropriate.
4. Inspector's reports/observation.
5. Visitors' comments.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

The permanent teaching staff of the school will take responsibility for the implementation, development and adjustments (in consultation with the parents) of this policy.

### **Implementation:**

This policy will be fully implemented in the school by November 2017 and reviewed in Spring 2019.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed in 2021.

### **Ratification**

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**Chairperson**