

St. Fiacc's NS Homework Policy

Rationale

Homework represents a regular link between home and school and as such represents a good opportunity for the development of a practical partnership between parents and teachers. All schools. The policy should give clarity to the whole school community about the purpose of the homework and what is expected at each class level.

Aims

Children at St. Fiacc's get homework to:

- Practise and reinforce work already done in class
- Test their understanding of work covered or competence in skills
- Provide an opportunity for them to work independently and develop self discipline
- Provide an opportunity for them to use non-school resources (parents, library, environment, media and internet)
- Provide a means for parents to see the sort of work their children are doing in school, and this in turn will enable parents to assess their progress
- Engage parents as partners in their child's education in an active way and so become involved in their child's learning.

Guidelines for Teachers

HOMEWORK SHOULD:

1. Be suited to the capabilities of pupils; children should be able to attempt homework within a reasonable time frame
2. Have a purpose
3. Be properly explained to children in advance
4. Be checked by the teacher
5. Be supervised/checked/signed off by parents
6. Be consistent with policy applying throughout the school.

HOW MUCH HOMEWORK SHOULD A CHILD EXPECT?

The amount of homework in each class and the time to be allocated to it are key features of our school's homework policy.

In general the following guidelines apply:

- Infants 10 – 15 minutes (No formal homework but perhaps some drawing, preliminary reading, matching shapes and pictures or listening to stories read by parents)
- 1st & 2nd Class 20 – 30 minutes
- 3rd & 4th Class 30 – 40 minutes
- 5th & 6th Class 40 – 60 minutes
- It must be stressed that these are suggested target times. In practice, the time taken will depend on the individual child

- Where pupils are receiving additional support from a member of the SEN Team the class teacher and SEN Teacher will collaborate in relation to the nature and type of homework the child is to receive. Homework should not exceed the times indicated above
- Homework is given from Monday to Thursday. Normally there is no homework at weekends.
- Teachers of the Junior Infant Classes should communicate and explain the role, type and nature of homework to parents at their meetings in September and assign tasks/update parents through Seesaw.
- Teachers of Senior Infant Classes should communicate the nature and type of homework children are expected to complete through a note at the beginning of the year and subsequently when new types of homework are introduced.
- Teachers of 2nd – 6th class pupils should provide adequate time of children to record their homework in their homework diaries and ensure children take home the necessary copies and books required to complete their homework.
- All teachers should constantly remind children that part of their homework is that they should make sure that they are prepared for the next school day – sharpen pencils, return all items into their folder/school bag etc.

Homework Sample Guideline for Teachers

Junior Infants	<p>Tracing/cutting activities ordering/sequencing/sorting/matching activities Nursery Rhymes Later in the year - Reading for fun/sounds folder</p>
Senior Infants	<p>Letter tracing/number formation Colouring Shapes Word families Sounds folder (Tricky words, revision of sounds) New Reading/Familiar Reading Folder</p>
First Class	<p>New Reading/Familiar Reading (Folder) Spelling (Based on sound of the week) Tables Written homework (Spelling/Maths/optional religion homework)</p>
Second Class	<p>New Reading/Familiar Reading Spelling - based on Rule of the Week Tables Written Homework in English and/or Maths</p>
Third Class	<p>Reading Written: Maths Written: English Written: Spelling</p>
Fourth Class	<p>Reading: New/Familiar Learning poetry/tables Written: Responding to a text/poem Written: Maths Questions ICT work x1/week Active homework x 1/week Project/STEM work spread over a number of days</p>
Fifth Class	<p>Written work: Gaeilge Written Work: Maths Reading: Read at Home x 1 night Reading: Leigh Sa Bhaile x 1 night One Make & Do activity to reinforce SESE</p>
Sixth Class	<p>Reading for Pleasure (2 sentence summaries) Written Maths Learning activity (eg Irish verbs/prayer/Geography)</p>

Expectations of Pupils

It is expected that pupils will:

- Return their homework on time
- Complete and present their homework to the best of their ability
- Appreciate that study tasks and learning spellings and tables are as important as written tasks.
- bring a note to school explaining why a task is incomplete, if homework has not been completed.

Sanctions

If a child has not completed all of their homework, a note should be provided by their parent, otherwise sanctions will apply. When implementing this policy, there must be leeway. A teacher will always use his/her discretion when implementing a sanction, taking due regard for issues surrounding the matter, the regularity of such an occurrence etc.

- At the teacher's discretion, the task will be completed to a satisfactory standard at home or during part of the school day.
- A note will also be sent home to be signed by the child's parent/guardian. This note will indicate whether the homework was not submitted, incomplete, unsatisfactory, or for another reason.
- If the issue persists, the matter will proceed down the route of the Code of Behaviour.

Guidelines for Parents

The school encourages the active involvement of parents in enabling their child to take responsibility and work independently. Parents are encouraged to:

- Establish a set routine and time for your child to do his/her homework (please see below)
- Supervise children's homework, checking and signing the homework journal on completion

- Be a resource for your child, but don't hover over him or her with constant advice or do their work for your son/daughter. Remember that sometimes the best help is a word of encouragement, or an acknowledgement of the effort that is being made – a smile, a hug.
- Forward a note to the teacher if homework has not been completed due to unforeseen circumstances.
- Remember that time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.
- If homework causes stress or worry to the child, parents are encouraged to convey these anxieties to the class teacher. All children from 2nd to 6th have a homework diary that parents are required to sign. The homework diary acts as a means of communication between class teacher and parent.

Please Note:

- Shared reading e.g. of library books, is not homework in the regular sense and it is simply meant to be an enjoyable exercise between parent and child.
- Homework is not linked to behaviour but occasionally pupils are rewarded with reduced homework or a child may be given constructive extra homework.

Creating the Homework Habit

Family situations, each one unique, undoubtedly influence a child's approach to homework and learning. Parents can help children develop good working habits. Please show your child that homework is an important priority and you value its worth by offering the following kinds of support.

- Sit down with your child and together schedule a time for completing homework assignments. Homework habits are more easily formed if children work at the same time each day.
- Help your child choose an appropriate study location – a quiet place, a desk or table for written work or a comfortable chair for reading.
- Provide your child with good lighting and necessary materials such as pencils, coloured pencils, paper and a dictionary.
- Ask your child to describe the assignment before beginning and later show you the completed work or summarize what he or she learned.
- If your child does need help, look over the material before you begin so you are familiar with the assignment.
- If your child becomes frustrated put the assignment away for a while.
- Please be available to check whether the assignment has been completed.
- Praise your child for completing homework.
- When possible, help your child relate homework assignments to everyday life and skills.

In general, be encouraging and supportive, your attitude is contagious.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF THERE IS A PROBLEM WITH MY CHILD'S HOMEWORK?

If you notice a problem with your child's homework, whether they have difficulty with a particular aspect of it, they can't complete it in the time set, or any other problem, you should alert your child's teacher as soon as possible. Write a note in their homework notebook if they have one or make an appointment to speak to the teacher.

If there is a change in home circumstances, such as a new baby, illness of a parent or any other reason, you should inform your child's teacher. This will assist both the teacher and your child.