

Donabate/Portrane Educate Together National School Homework Policy

1. Why Give Homework?

- To reinforce the child's memory of what he/she had learned during the day.
- To provide a link between teacher and parent/carer.
- To give an opportunity for parents or carers to learn more about the child's day at school.
- To develop a child's concentration skills and develop a work ethic that will prepare children for the demands of secondary school and encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Homework is meant to be achievable by a child, i.e. it provides an opportunity to practise work already done.
- Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their individual ability – no more, no less.

2. How Often Is Homework Given?

- Each teacher has their own homework system and this will be discussed with parents/carers either at an Acquaintance Meeting or via notes home.
- Homework is generally given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays.
- When there is a midweek closure, homework will be set as usual on the school day before the closure. This will not involve extra homework for the day off.
- Extra work will not be given to children who miss school for holidays or for short-term illness.
- As part of the positive behaviour policy, homework vouchers may be given as part of the reward system. These entitle the child to take a night (of their choice) off homework. Parents/carers should sign the homework journal on the night that the child chooses to indicate the use of the voucher, and the voucher must be returned to the class teacher.
- Please note that extra homework may sometimes be given to individual children in accordance with the positive behaviour policy of our school.

3. What is The Content of the Homework?

- Ideally homework will contain a balance of tasks:
- Tasks may include reading, spelling, tables, written work, pieces to be 'learned by heart', drawing/colouring and collecting information*/items.

**Parents/carers are advised to supervise any information searches on the internet.*

4. How Much Time Should Be Spent on Homework?

- The following are guidelines for time spent on 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** and for the **maximum** time to be spent.

Junior Infants 0-10 minutes

Senior Infants 20 minutes

First Class 30 minutes

Second class 40 minutes

Third Class 50 Minutes

Fourth Class 1 hour

Fifth Class 1 hour 15 minutes

Sixth Class 1 hour 30 minutes

- **N.B.** As a general rule, one hour spent on homework in Fifth and Sixth classes should be sufficient, however, it is important that the child concentrates properly for that period of time.
- We stress that the guidelines above are the absolute maximum a child should spend on homework.

5. How Much Help Should Parents/Carers Give?

- Parents/carers will be advised on how to monitor homework for Junior Infants and Senior Infants by the class teacher.
- Children from 1st to 6th should be able to do written work by themselves. However, if they are really stuck, then parents/ carers may need to help. If a particular piece of work has caused a real problem then this should be noted in the journal for the teacher's attention.

6. How Should Parents/Carers Monitor Homework?

- Parents/carers will be advised on how to monitor homework for their Junior Infants and Senior Infants by the class teacher.
- Children will be asked to write homework in their journal from First Class onwards.
- The pupil's journal is an important record of the child's homework. It is also a valuable means of communication between home and school.
- Provision will be made in the case of children with special needs who have difficulty writing and recording their homework to ensure that their homework is accurately recorded. Arrangements will be made with parent/teacher consultation.

- Please check that your child records their homework neatly in the correct page and ticks each item of homework when it is completed.
- Parents/carers should check work and sign a child's homework journal every evening. If your child does their homework outside of the home and/or with another person, these guidelines should be discussed with them also.
- Written messages to your child's teacher can be put in the child's journal (there are additional pages available) or alternatively parents may write a letter or send an email.
- Letters to parents/carers are either written into or folded and placed in the current week of the homework journal.

7. How Often Do Teachers Monitor Homework?

- Ideally teachers like to check homework on a daily basis. However with large class numbers this is not always possible.
- As children get older some items of homework need more time for checking.
- Special Needs Assistants (SNA) may be asked to check homework under the direction of the teacher.
- Some items of homework may be checked by children themselves or other children under the direction of the teacher. This is considered a valuable tool in the children's self-assessment.

8. When Should Parents/Carers Communicate With The Teacher 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 frequently longer than the recommended length of time.
- If parents/carers are having difficulties with new concepts.
- If child or parent is unsure of what task is involved.
- Parents/Carers may communicate with the teacher by writing on the child's journal or talking directly to the teacher.

9. When Should Homework Be Done?

- Each family situation is different and each child is different. While some children do their homework straight after school, others need a break. Find out what homework routine suits your child and family best.

10. What Happens If Homework Is Not Completed?

- It is school policy to value homework as an important part of a child's education. Parents will be informed if homework is not completed on a regular basis. Non-completion of homework is considered unacceptable behaviour and will be dealt with on an individual basis, according to our Positive Behaviour Policy.

Remember - if homework is regularly a stressful experience between parent and child, then you should contact your child's class teacher.