**Donabate/Portrane Educate Together National School Homework Policy**

Following a review of our Homework Policy throughout the 2017/2018 and the 2018/2019 school years parents, students and teachers’ views were sought. The general consensus was that we needed a policy that would support each child’s learning but would also:

* Reduce the amount of stress and conflict that homework can cause
* Assign some homework on a weekly basis to allow for increased flexibility
* Reduce the overall amount of homework given

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.
* To provide the child with an opportunity to practise work already done.

1. **How Often Is Homework Given?**

* Written homework is generally given on a weekly basis – given on Mondays to be returned on Thursdays or Fridays. Spellings, tables and reading should be practiced daily on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.
* No written homework is assigned in the months of September, December or June.
* In these months reading, tables, spellings, life skills, discussions will be assigned. Children will be encouraged to take exercise and to play games.

1. **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.*

1. **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/Senior Infants Minimal homework assigned on a Monday to be returned on Friday.

First/Second Class 20- 30 minutes

Third/Fourth Class 30-40 minutes

Fifth/Sixth Class 40-60 minutes

* We stress that the guidelines above are the absolute maximum a child should spend on homework.

1. **Homework Enrichment/Project Based Homework**

* Teachers assigning Homework Enrichment or Project Based Homework will generally draw up a yearly calendar and communicate this to parents at the beginning of each term. A maximum of three project based assignments should be undertaken in the school year.
* Teachers are requested to draw up a set of clear guidelines so that students and parents have an understanding of both the learning intention and the success criteria.
* Before deciding to undertake a Home Enrichment task students must discuss this with their parents and agree together the value of this project.
* Parents/Students should have at least three weeks notice of the date that a Homework Enrichment or project is due.

1. **What is the role of the parent/carer in Homework**

* Encourage your child’s work
* Ensure that your child has a quiet environment to work in, free from distractions where possible.
* 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
* Children who are receiving additional supports for their learning in school may be assigned alternative homework, or may report their homework in a different way, for example with the support of ICT. Decision in this regard will be made with parent/teacher consultation.
* 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.

1. **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.

1. **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. Some children benefit from a break during their homework. Find out what homework routine suits your child and family best.

1. **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.

For additional information on how to support your child’s learning at home go to <http://www.npc.ie/images/uploads/downloads/LearningatHome.PDF>

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