

Homework Policy of St. Lassara's N.S.

Introduction

The staff came together to review this policy and record what is current practice in this school.

Rationale

It was deemed necessary to review this policy as teachers felt there was a need to promote consistency and similar approach to homework throughout the school, especially when there is a change of staff in the school.

It is also hoped that it will strengthen links and communication between home and school.

Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school

St. Lassara's N.S. seeks to enable each pupil to develop his/her potential. Homework encourages pupils to work independently, take responsibility for their learning and in the main, reinforces and revises new concepts they have learned at school that day/week or over a period of time

Aims

In our school, we give homework for the following reasons:

- To consolidate work already undertaken in school – it allows for revision and practice. However, at times, homework may be more challenging and provide opportunities for creativity.
- To encourage children to become independent learners and to revise, reinforce, finish work that has begun in school.
- To develop skills and self discipline that will be of benefit to children in order to enhance learning.
- To develop study skills and to assist in establishing an appropriate routine for children in doing their homework
- To develop a work ethic among pupils and assist in the development of concentration skills.
- Homework is intended to be achievable by the pupil and is normally prepared by the Class Teacher and/or Special Education Teacher. Pupils are expected to do their homework to the best of their ability at all times.

Homework also allows parents become aware of the work being done in school. Parents are expected to oversee the children's homework and sign the Homework Diary when it is completed.

Assigning homework:

It is recommended that, insofar as is possible, children are encouraged to sit down every evening, in a quiet place, away from distraction, to do their homework.

All classes from Junior Infants to 6th Class are assigned homework from Monday to Thursday. As a rule, homework is not given at weekends unless homework

- has not been done to the best of the pupils ability (on a regular basis) during the week.
- involves project work (this applies to Senior Classes in particular).

Occasionally at the discretion of the Class Teacher or the Principal, pupils are given a night “off homework” as a treat/reward or as an acknowledgement of a special occasion/event in the school.

Extra homework may be assigned if a pupil does not have their homework done or has presented untidy or unfinished work.

Homework is differentiated for pupils with Special Educational Needs. Homework may be assigned by both the Class Teacher and/or the Special Education Teacher, following collaboration.

Guidelines

The following are guidelines of homework in our school. There are times when teachers may give extra or different homework.

We suggest children are given a quiet place to do homework – away from the distraction of TV, phones, Ipads, games etc.

Content of Homework

Homework is seen as reinforcement of work done in class. Ideally homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and reading tasks but this balance is not always possible and homework can vary from day to day.

We give equal importance to oral and written homework. For children to improve at reading and maths, they must read at home and must learn tables.

All children benefit from listening to stories and reading books with adults.

It is important for children to read aloud. They may also have to learn a verse of a poem. Parents play an important role in listening to reading and pieces to be learned off, thus ensuring this work is well done.

Homework will generally contain a selection of the following: reading, spellings, tables, written work, drawing/colouring, collecting information/items and finishing work started in class. Learning off by heart or memorising is a great way of developing the child’s working memory.

During themed weeks, for example Science Week, the children may be set homework, which can be done as a family, instead as an individual piece of work.

Time allocation

Different pupils will complete the same homework in different lengths of time. Time spent will vary from day to day and from one end of the school year to the other. It is important to

remember that it is the **quality** and not the **quantity** of homework that is important. These are suggested times for homework – these times are based on children working on homework with no distractions.

Junior Infants – up to 20 minutes

Senior Infants – up to 30 minutes

Rang 1 – up to 40 minutes

Rang 2 – up to 40 minutes

Rang 3 – up to 50 minutes

Rang 4 – up to 50 minutes

Rang 5 – up to 1 hour

Rang 6 – up to 1 hour 15 minutes

Homework Journal

Pupils from 1st Class to 6th Class have a homework journal. Homework is generally assigned at the end of a lesson. The Class Teacher writes the homework on the whiteboard and the children are given time at the beginning or the end of the school day to copy it into their homework journal. Parents are expected to sign the homework journal when all tasks are completed. Homework journals will be checked by the teacher regularly.

Role of Parents/Guardians

Parents can help their child with their homework by providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework, away from distractions or interruptions, like the T.V.

The child should be encouraged to do written homework themselves and parents should only help if the child is having difficulty.

If the child is having difficulty with homework, parents should help the child 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.

Paired Reading is not homework in a regular sense. It is simply meant to be an enjoyable activity between parent and child. If it's not enjoyable, this should be communicated to the teacher who may provide different reading material at an appropriate level.

Parents should check and sign the Homework Journal every evening.

Children should be encouraged to work through their homework and tick each item of homework when completed.

Parents should communicate with the child's teacher when a child cannot do homework due to family circumstances or when the child does not understand some aspect of the homework.

Ideally, all written messages to your child's teacher should be written in the homework journal.

As part of our Code of Behaviour children who do not complete homework on a regular basis may not be allowed to take part in after school activities or special treats.

Role of teachers

Teachers will check homework on a daily basis. Some items of homework (and classwork) may be corrected by the children themselves with teacher guidance. This can form part of the learning process for the children.

Every effort will be made to set homework appropriate to the child's ability.

Success Criteria

The success of this policy will be determined by feedback from parents, pupils and teachers. This will be sought at Parent/Teacher Meetings during the 1st term. In general, where pupils are handing in satisfactory exercises and assignments and reading and memorizing activities are well practiced, this will be interpreted as reflecting positively on this policy. Similarly, where the results of regular class assessments are satisfactory, this will also be interpreted as reflecting positively on this policy.

Roles and Responsibility

The class teacher and/or the special education teacher assigns homework, taking into consideration the recommended time allocation for homework and monitors it on a regular basis.

The pupils (1st Class – 6th Class) are responsible for writing homework in their homework journal and taking home all their books, copies and equipment necessary to complete the homework tasks.

Parents are responsible for providing a suitable place, free of distractions, for the child to do their homework. They are also responsible for monitoring the homework process at home and ensuring that all homework is complete to the best of the child's ability.

Parents are also responsible for communicating with the class teacher where difficulties may arise.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy and for its review.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Review

The staff will evaluate this Homework Policy as and when the need arises to ensure the Policy reflects the school's current needs.

The staff will present any revisions to the Policy to the Board of Management for ratification.

The Policy will be communicated to parents at enrolment and through the website.