

Homework Policy Gaelscoil Bhaile Brigín.

Homework Policy

Title

Gaelscoil Bhaile Brigín's Homework Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was drafted by staff on our School-Development Planning Day, which took place on 16/3/09. This policy was also discussed by Coiste na dTuistí. It was put in front of the Board for discussion at the ---- Board Meeting. It was also discussed with students in the Senior Classes, to collect their opinions in relation to Homework.

After it had been discussed with all parties, the final draft was put in front of the Board for ratification.

This policy was reviewed during the the 2016-17 academic year. It was discussed and researched by staff at staff meetings from September to Easter. The Parents' Committee was consulted and it was discussed with students. It was then presented to the Board of Management, where it was ratified at the May Board of Management.

Rationale

We felt it was necessary to devise a policy on homework at this time for the following reasons:

- *To promote positive home/school communication.*
- *Teachers had shown concerns regarding homework*
- *Feedback from parents at parent-teacher meetings showed concerns about homework and the amount of time children were spending on it.*
- *The staff had spent a significant amount of time discussing and researching this topic, research which highlighted the little positive effect that written homework has on younger children*
- *The school believes that the students spend a long time in school and by afternoon, that often students cannot focus sufficiently*
- *The school recognises the importance of play in the students' lives and that this is a child's work. It would be preferable for children to spend time playing instead of attending to written homework.*
- *The benefits of the amount of time spent in-class on homework is questionable and the school believes that this time could be maximised through focusing on other areas*
- *In its current form, it is not feasible to provide individualised, differentiated homework. Research shows that this is the effective way of assigning homework*
- *The school believes that in its current form that the most appropriate skills are not being developed.*
- *It has been reported that, in its current form, that homework is encroaching on family life and is a stressor*

- *The school recognises however, that we have a duty to prepare children for secondary school and to begin the process of developing study skills and thus written homework will be assigned in 5th & 6th class.*

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

- The school recognises its role in supporting the home
- *Gaelscoil Bhaile Brigín seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential. It is envisaged that this approach will support families and children in actively developing skills learned in school, in a fun way*
- *It also affords parents the opportunity to have worthwhile input into their child(ren)s learning.*
- *The school believes that this approach will strengthen home-school ties by providing opportunities to encourage an interest in education. It is felt that the current approach is not conducive to this. By emphasising reading as homework, it is envisaged that parents can positively influence their children's learning.*
- *The school believes in the importance of play and interaction with other people. We believe that children can develop skills and interests through play, investigation and interaction and that this is more worthwhile than written tasks.*
- *The school will provide a suggestions for families who wish to support the aims of the curriculum at home.*

Aims

The school hopes to achieve the following aims by introducing this policy

- *To support the development of reading, mental math and spelling skills in our students, without the added pressure of written homework*
- *To encourage an interest in reading*
- *To develop skills and self discipline that will be of benefit to children in order to enhance learning*
- *reinforce work done in class by providing suggestions of fun activities that can be done at home*
- *To develop study skills and to assist in establishing an appropriate routine for children in doing their homework at senior level*
- *To promote consistency and a similar approach to homework across all classes*
- *To encourage children to become independent learners.*
- *To strengthen links and communication between home and school*

Guidelines:

As a school, we recognise the importance of good communication between home and school and we recognise the role that homework plays in that. Therefore, it is important that information is shared on a continual basis about work being done in class.

An overview will be sent home monthly/termly of the work being covered in class and examples of activities which can augment this work will be given. Eg measurement in math – baking, fine motor skills in infants – cutting/márla, a trip to the library, social skills – board games, debates etc.

Assigning Homework:

- All Classes, including Junior Infants will get homework. This will be oral homework covering reading, mental math and spelling.
- There will be no written homework until 5th class
- Suggestions to support curricular work at home will be provided to families for those who wish to avail of them
- Homework will be differentiated to meet the needs of students, with the discretion of the class teacher. The class teacher will assign homework (5th/6th – written), however, Learning Support Teachers may give reading/spelling also.
- Homework is seen as reinforcement of work done in class, not as a tool to introduce new work.

Homework is to be clearly explained by teacher to students in advance.

- Homework is given everyday, Monday – Thursday.

Here is a suggested timeframe for each class in relation to amount of time spent on homework.

- Junior Infants – up to 20 mins
- Senior Infants – up to 20 mins
- 1st Class: 20 mins
- 2nd Class: 20 mins
- 3rd Class: 20 mins
- 4th Class: 20 mins
- 5th Class: 30-40 mins
- 6th Class: 30-40mins
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- Please remember that this a guideline – please note also that this is amount of time child actually spends working!
- Extra Homework will not be used as a punishment (except in exceptional circumstances eg serious breach of discipline. The Code of Behaviour will be followed in such circumstances). However, whereby a student does not finish work as a result of messing/not working in school, this work may be done at home that night instead.

Homework journal:

- All classes from 1st + will have a homework journal
 - Parents are expected to sign the homework journal on a nightly basis. The amount of time spent on homework should be filled in here too. This is seen as an agreement that homework has been checked and that it is of a satisfactory standard. By filling in the time taken, it will show the teacher the suitability of time/homework.
 - Homework journals will be checked regularly by teachers.
 - Students are expected to keep their journals tidy.
- **Checking homework:**
 - All homework will be corrected.
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 - Credit is given for effort as well as achievement, and prizes can be given out under the teacher's discretion.
 - When homework is not done, a note will be made of this in the homework notebook, and the parent is asked to sign this. This gives parents the opportunity to see when their child is not doing his/her homework. When a child has not done his/her homework, the parent should inform the teacher. When a teacher has not been informed by a parent, he/she will have to do it the following night. In the case of student who regularly fails to do homework, or leaves it at home, the Code of Behaviour will be followed.
 - A record is kept of pupils who, on a regular basis, fail to do homework or leave it at home. A note will be sent home and a record of it will be kept in the teacher's folder.

Pupils:

- Pupils are expected to do their homework every night to a satisfactory standard.
- Pupils are expected to make every effort to their homework, with guidance from parents if necessary, however, if they are having difficulties with it, parents should inform the teachers. A parent should not do the pupil's homework, it would be better to let the teacher know in order for that topic to be covered again.
- Teachers discuss homework with students on a regular basis to ensure that all aspects of it are ok.

Parents/Guardians:

- Coiste na dTuistí were involved in discussions in relation to this policy.
- Parents are made aware through Parent-Teacher meetings/Newsletter and now by this policy, of agreed procedures in relation to homework.
- Parental feedback will be sought after a trial period of this new policy
- Parental support is hugely important for all students learning and it is highly recommended that parents/guardians create an encouraging environment everyday to develop reading, mental math and spelling skills.

Hints for Parents:

- It is recommended that homework is done earlier rather than later after school.
- A quiet place should be provided – without a television or other distractions.
- As the emphasis is on reading, spelling and mental math up until 4th class, we would ask parents that time is spent focusing on these aspects at home
- There are recommendations for support activities that can be done at home to support work being done in school. It is recommended, when possible, to keep an eye on them and implement suggestions that suit your family.
- Parents should avoid doing the child's homework, rather provide support and guidance eg handwriting/grammar/maths/spelling (Rang 5/6)
- If a child is having difficulties, let him/her take little breaks.
- If a child is having difficulties with any aspect of their homework, it would be of great value to discuss this with class teacher/put a note in journal.
- RE: Irish – try your best, however, we do realise that Irish is not, in most cases, the language of the home. Suggestions: have a list of phrases to help
It is recommended to parents to have a 'homework survival kit' e.g. pencils, erasures, rulers, tables book, copies/ dictionary etc.

Success Criteria

some practical indicators of the success of the policy

- Feedback from teachers, pupils, parents,
- Satisfactory homework exercises and assignments submitted by pupils

Roles and Responsibility

The following will have responsibilities as laid out below

* Class teacher – assigning/correcting/explaining homework – dealing with cases of homework not being done.

*Pupil – doing his/her homework to a satisfactory standard.

*Principal – ensuring the implementation of and adherence to this policy

*Parent/Guardian – helping at home/signing homework journal daily/relaying difficulties to teachers

Implementation Date

This policy will implemented from the date of ratification – (see below)

Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years or, if necessary sooner. This will be reviewed again during the school year 2013/14

Ratification & Communication

The BoM officially ratified the policy at the Board of Management Meeting of the 27/4/09. The policy was then circulated to all parents.

This policy was reviewed during 2016-17 and was ratified at the May Board of Management meeting.

It was shared with parents via Newsletter

Siniú an Chathaoirligh: _____

Dáta: _____

