



Bandonbridge N.S. Homework Policy

(see also Homework Club Policy)

Current review and revision: 03/11/2021

Reviewed:

Introduction

Homework provides the children with the opportunity of revisiting learning experiences encountered during the school day and of practising the skills and concepts associated with those learning experiences. In the senior classes some homework is designed to challenge the children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity. The children are expected to do their homework to the best of their ability – no more, no less.

Why give homework?

- To reinforce what the child learns during the day
- To provide a link between teacher and parent/guardian
- To develop a child's concentration skills and to develop a work ethic
- It encourages opportunities for research and independent learning in older children
- In senior classes, it gives pupils experience of working to deadlines
- A pupil may be excused from doing homework when, in the opinion of the teachers, the reason is acceptable.

How often is homework given?

- Homework is generally given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
- Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given "homework off" as a treat or as acknowledgment of some special occasion
- Please note extra homework may sometimes be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not completed their homework, has not made a suitable effort or has presented untidy work

What is the content of homework?

- Ideally homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks
- This balance is not always possible and can vary considerably from day to day. However, it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work
- Homework will regularly contain reading, spellings, tables, written work, pieces to be "learned by heart", drawing/colouring, collecting information/items and finishing work started in class
- Children often feel that reading and "learning by heart" is not real homework. Parents/guardians can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned ensuring this work is done well
- Homework should be varied to include all subject areas and involve oral and written work.
- Homework could involve preparation for "News Time" or "Show and Tell".
- Homework may involve online activities using an electronic device.
- The work should be a logical extension of classwork and be challenging to the student.
- Homework may be differentiated for individual pupil needs. The Support Teacher may assume responsibility for setting homework for some of their assigned pupils.

How much (time) homework?

The following are guidelines for time spent at 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 only:

Junior Infants

Maximum time homework should take: 10 mins.

Senior Infants

Maximum time homework should take: 20 mins.

1st/2nd

Maximum time homework should take: 30 mins.

3rd/4th

Maximum time homework should take: 40 mins.

5th/6th

Maximum time homework should take: 1 hour

Homework in senior classes is viewed as a form of preparation for homework in secondary school. We often give homework that will not be requested for a period of time. This challenges pupils to learn to organise homework time and take personal responsibility for research/learning etc.

Leisure Time Reading

We recognise the importance of cultivating the habit of independent reading. Pupils are encouraged to borrow books from the classroom library or bring in books of their own. Leisure time reading is allowed when work is completed or during D.E.A.R. time (Drop Everything And Read). In addition to the set reading homework, we would like pupils to engage in their own reading at home; whether factual or fiction.

How can parents/guardians foster and develop this habit in their children?

- Encourage children to choose books independently.
- Talk to children about their choice of books and be aware of what they are reading in their spare time.
- Encourage children to spend time reading on a regular basis. This should include weekends and holidays.
- Library books should be brought back each week on the appropriate day. Every child should have a book for silent reading in class and one to read at home. Some children are well able to cope with reading two books concurrently. For others this is too confusing and so they need help organising themselves for their reading activities.
- Continue reading aloud with your child as long as he or she considers it an enjoyable activity.
- Let your children see you reading.
- Join a public library.

Reading introduces us to diverse worlds and thoughts and gives children the opportunity to confront powerful emotional experiences in a safe environment. Reading allows us to share in the experiences of others and to learn from them. The cultivation of a regular reading habit privileges a child with a life enriching habit that will prove both pleasurable and valuable.

How much help should parents/guardians give with homework?

Parents/guardians should try to help their children with homework by:

- Providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework.
- Endeavouring to prevent interruptions or distractions to the work, like T.V. personal devices or other children.
- Provide supervision for younger children but encourage independence as children progress through the school.
- Generally, children should do written homework themselves and parents/guardians should only help when the child has difficulty.
- Parents should check what homework the child has to do each night and ensure that the child completes it to the best of their ability.
- If a child has difficulty with homework, the parents/guardians should help the child to overcome the difficulty with further explanation or examples, but not by actually doing the homework for the child.
- If a child has substantial difficulty completing a particular task within a reasonable period of time (15 minutes), the task should be left uncompleted so as not to cause frustration and anxiety for the child. A note/email explaining the difficulty should be given to the teacher so that the problem can be addressed the following day.
- Shared reading is not homework in the regular sense, and it is simply meant to be an enjoyable exercise between parent/guardian and child. If it's not enjoyable, shared reading should not be done.
- Parents should help pupils with basic sight vocabulary from lists provided by the teachers.

- Parents should oversee activities which pupils are set involving research on the Internet or other online activities.
- Some children may have assistive technology which supports their learning (usually a laptop). Teachers may set homework using the pupil's AT device (see also Home Use of School Owned Assistive Technology Policy).

How often should parents/guardians monitor homework?

- Parents/guardians should check their child/ren's homework daily: listen to the child reading and ask questions about the content or vocabulary, ask their spelling/tables/learning activity, ensure written work is completed to the best of the child's ability.

How often do teachers monitor homework?

- Teachers like to check homework on a daily basis.
- As children get older and learn to work independently, some items of homework are corrected as a whole class activity or may be assessed verbally as part of a lesson: i.e. pupils read aloud a writing genre/history paragraph and the teacher(or peers) offers constructive critique.
- Children themselves under the direction of the teacher may check some items of homework (and classwork). This can be a useful part of the learning process for children.

When should parents/guardians communicate with the teachers 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 often longer than the recommended amount of time
- Parents/guardians may communicate with the class teacher via the teacher's school email which is circulated at the beginning of each school year.