



BANDONBRIDGE N.S.

Homework Policy

Supporting learning • building independence • strengthening home–school partnership

Current review and revision

03/11/2021

Reviewed

Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their ability — no more, no less.

Introduction

Homework provides children with the opportunity to revisit learning experiences encountered during the school day and to practise the skills and concepts associated with those learning experiences. In the senior classes, some homework is designed to challenge children’s ability and provide opportunities for creativity.

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 work ethic.
- To encourage opportunities for research and independent learning in older children.
- In senior classes, to give 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.
- At the discretion of the class teacher or principal, children may occasionally be given “homework off” as a treat or in acknowledgement of a special occasion.
- Extra homework may sometimes be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not completed homework, has not made a suitable effort or has presented untidy work.

What Is the Content of Homework?

- Ideally, homework will contain a balance of reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks.
- This balance may vary from day to day. Time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.
- Homework may include reading, spellings, tables, written work, pieces to be learned by heart, drawing/colouring, collecting information or items, and finishing work started in class.
- Parents/guardians can play an important role by listening to reading and items to be learned and ensuring that this work is completed carefully.
- Homework should be varied, include a range of subject areas and involve both oral and written work.
- Homework may 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 should challenge the pupil appropriately.
- Homework may be differentiated to meet individual pupil needs. The Support Teacher may assume responsibility for setting homework for some assigned pupils.

How Much Time Should Homework Take?

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 throughout the school year. The quality of homework is more important than the quantity.

Class Level	Maximum Guideline
Junior Infants	10 minutes

Senior Infants	20 minutes
1st / 2nd Class	30 minutes
3rd / 4th Class	40 minutes
5th / 6th Class	1 hour

Homework in senior classes is viewed as preparation for homework in secondary school. Homework may sometimes be assigned for completion over a longer period, challenging pupils to organise their time and take personal responsibility for research and learning.

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 encouraged when work is completed and during D.E.A.R. time (Drop Everything And Read). In addition to set reading homework, pupils are encouraged to read independently at home, whether factual or fiction.

Parents/guardians can foster and develop this habit by:

- Encouraging children to choose books independently.
- Talking to children about their choice of books and being aware of what they are reading in their spare time.
- Encouraging regular reading, including at weekends and during holidays.
- Ensuring library books are returned each week on the appropriate day and helping children organise books for school and home reading.
- Continuing to read aloud with a child for as long as it remains an enjoyable activity.
- Letting children see adults reading.
- Joining a public library.

A regular reading habit opens children to diverse worlds, ideas and experiences and can become a lifelong source of learning and enjoyment.

How Much Help Should Parents/Guardians Give?

- Provide a suitable place and time for homework.
- Endeavour to prevent interruptions or distractions such as television, personal devices or other children.
- Provide supervision for younger children while encouraging increasing independence as children progress through the school.
- Written homework should generally be completed by the child; parents/guardians should help only when the child has difficulty.
- Check what homework the child has each night and ensure it is completed to the best of the child's ability.
- Where a child has difficulty, offer further explanation or examples rather than doing the homework for the child.
- If a child has substantial difficulty with a particular task for a reasonable period (approximately 15 minutes), the task should be left unfinished to avoid frustration or anxiety. A note or email should be sent to the teacher so that the difficulty can be addressed the following day.

- Shared reading is intended to be an enjoyable activity between parent/guardian and child. If it is not enjoyable, it should not be continued as a homework task.
- Help pupils with basic sight vocabulary from lists provided by teachers.
- Oversee Internet research or other online activities set for homework.
- Where a pupil uses assistive technology, teachers may set homework using the pupil's AT device. Please also refer to the Home Use of School Owned Assistive Technology Policy.

How Often Should Parents/Guardians Monitor Homework?

- Parents/guardians should check their child/children's homework daily: listen to reading and ask questions about content or vocabulary; check spellings, tables or other learning activities; and ensure written work is completed to the best of the child's ability.
- While after-school childcare providers may attend to homework with children, the parent/guardian remains ultimately responsible for checking that all homework assignments — reading, written and learning — are completed to a satisfactory standard.

How Often Do Teachers Monitor Homework?

- Teachers aim to check homework on a daily basis.
- As children become older and more independent, some homework may be corrected as a whole-class activity or assessed verbally as part of a lesson. For example, pupils may read aloud a writing genre or history paragraph and receive constructive critique from the teacher or peers.
- Under the direction of the teacher, children may check some items of homework and classwork. This can be a useful part of the learning process.

When Should Parents/Guardians Communicate With the Teacher?

- When a child cannot complete homework due to family circumstances.
- When a child cannot complete homework because they do not understand some aspect of the work.
- When the time being spent on homework is frequently longer than the recommended guideline.
- Parents/guardians may communicate with the class teacher via the teacher's school email address, which is circulated at the beginning of each school year.