

Kiltiernan N.S. Homework Policy

Introductory Statement

Homework fosters independence, self-reliance, self-esteem, co-operation and responsibility for life long learning.

Homework is an integral link in the chain of communication between school and home. Parents can monitor the progress of their children through continual reference to Homework diaries and liaison with teachers. This policy, a redraft of the 2003 model, attempts to further strengthen positive home-school links through streamlining the processes involved. The homework policy of Kiltiernan N.S. has been formulated by staff with parental input, and endorsed by the Board of Management.

Rationale

The need to redraft and amend the homework policy of the school can be attributed to the following –

- Further strengthening of home-school links
- Reinforcing the learning experienced by the child during the school day
- Ensuring clarity as to the recommended time to be spent on homework

Relationship to School Ethos

Kiltiernan N.S seeks to enable each child to develop their full potential.

It is the policy of the school to, as far as is possible, identify all the needs of the pupil and put in place measures to adequately cater for their needs.

The school also encourages the active involvement of parents in enabling their child to take responsibility and work independently. The homework policy of the school facilitates these ideals.

Aims and Objectives

The primary objectives of the policy are –

- To consolidate learning through reinforcement of class work
- To enable the children develop a sense of responsibility and independence
- To enhance self-esteem through the provision of a work menu that is do-able
- To foster self-discipline and study skills
- To promote consistency and a uniform approach to homework across all classes
- To further develop links between home and school

Resources

- Homework Diary
- Whiteboard
- Work sheets, textbooks, folders, exercise copies etc.
- I.C.T.

Policy Content

In general, homework is meant to be achievable by a child working on their own to the best of their ability. It is normally prepared by the teacher in class. It can be used to practice what is done in school or can be designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity.

It is school policy to assign appropriate class-related levels of homework as an important reinforcement in the learning process. Good study habits are fostered, independent learning is promoted and self-discipline is developed.

How often is homework given?

Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays with certain exceptions:

- If homework has been neglected during the week
- In senior classes some project work is undertaken at weekends.
- Novel reading for Senior Classes.

Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given 'homework off' as a treat or as acknowledgement of some special occasion.

Homework Content

Usually, homework contains a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks. This balance is not always possible and can vary considerably from day to day.

The assigned homework is explained to children in advance. The different levels of the pupils are also taken into account.

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 can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned, ensuring this work is done well.

Homework is normally given at the end of the school day.

Each child from First Class upwards is responsible for writing their homework in the homework notebook from the Whiteboard. Senior Infants are encouraged towards the end of the school year to try to write their own homework.

Pupils should:

- enter homework accurately in homework notebook.
- ensure they take home relevant books and copies.
- complete homework assignments to the best of their ability.
- present written work neatly.

Each teacher in Kiltiernan School has devised their own home-work process guide for Parents which is distributed at the beginning of each school year –**See Appendix 1, 2, & 3.**

Pupils attending Learning Support classes

The Learning Support Teachers will work with the class teacher to ensure that children are not receiving "double" homework. In general the homework is assigned by the class teacher. Occasionally the learning support teacher may give homework to their allocated pupils but only as a reinforcement of class work. Reading is routinely given as homework and should be accorded priority consideration.

Duration of 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:

Infants 0-20 minutes

Rang 1 - 20 to 25 minutes

Rang 2-4 20 to 40 minutes

Rang 5 & 6 -40 to 60 minutes

Procedures for Parents

1. Provide suitable comfortable facilities.
2. Remove distractions – T.V. younger siblings etc.
3. Help child overcome difficulties through explanation.
4. Parents should not do the homework for their children
5. The homework diary acts as a means of communication between class teacher and parent.
6. If homework causes stress or worry to the child, parents are encouraged to convey these anxieties to the class teacher. If homework cannot be completed on a particular night, parents are asked to forward a written note in the homework notebook.
7. Check and sign homework diaries.
8. Notify the class teacher if time spent on homework exceeds the recommended time regularly.
9. As children tire towards late evening, encourage the completion of homework as early as possible.
10. Discourage morning homework.
11. Parents should have a stock of rulers, pencils, rubbers, table books etc. available should the need arise.
12. Parents should fill in days absent in the back of homework notebooks, providing date and reason for absence.

When should homework be done

- Each family situation is different,(parents working, child minders, etc.) Ideally, homework should be done before any television is watched soon after school while your child is still fresh, however, some child need a break before starting homework.
- Homework should never be left until morning time before school.

Remember

If homework is a stressful experience between parent and child, something is wrong! This leads to poor learning and defeats the whole purpose. Should this happen on a regular basis, please contact the class teacher.

Procedures for Teachers.

Set homework, review assignments and provide feedback to students.
Monitor homework to help identify pupils with special difficulties

How often do teachers monitor homework?

Ideally, teachers check homework on a daily basis. However, with multi classes/large numbers it is not always possible to check each child's homework journal every day. As children get older and learn to work independently, some items of homework are checked less often, e.g. every second day or once a week. Some items of homework (and class work) may be checked by children themselves, under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children as it promotes responsibility and self esteem.
Some homework may be self correcting

What happens when Homework is not done?

When homework is not done regularly the teacher contacts parents with a view to resolving the situation. If the situation continues, then the matter is brought to the attention of the Principal who will contact the parent(s) and arrange a meeting to discuss how the matter can be resolved.

Evaluation

- In-class corrections
- Checking homework diaries
- Parent – Teacher meetings
- Teacher designated tests
- Pupil profiling
- Teacher observation
- Feedback from parents and pupils
- General air of satisfaction

Roles and Responsibilities / Implementation

All stakeholders have a role to play in the implementation of this policy from pupils / parents right up to Board of Management.

This policy has been in operation in the school since September 2005

Ratification / Communication

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management in 2005 and communicated to all parents on a regular basis.

Timetable for Review

This policy was reviewed in March 2011. It will be reviewed again in March 2013.

References

The Essential Parents Guide to the Primary School Years. - Brian Gilsenan
Your Child in the Primary School - I.N.T.O
Your Child's Learning - D.E.S. Primary School Curriculum