

## Scoil Mhuire Homework Policy

### 1 Introduction

Scoil Mhuire seeks to enable each child to develop his /her potential. Homework encourages pupils to work independently and to take responsibility for their assignments.

Homework is anything that children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning in response to guidance from the school. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support children's learning. For example, a parent who spends time reading a story to their child before bedtime is helping with homework.

### 2 Rationale for homework

**2.1** Homework is a very important part of a child's education and can add much to a child's development. We recognise that the time and resources available limit the educational experience that any school by itself can provide; children benefit greatly therefore from the mutual support of parents and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. Indeed we see homework as an important way of establishing a successful dialogue between teachers and parents. One of the aims of our school is for children to develop as independent learners. We believe that homework is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

**2.2** Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. We also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. While homework is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in the wide range of out-of-school clubs and organisations that play an important part in the lives of many children. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe they develop their skills, interests and talents to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the experiences and opportunities that are available outside of school.

### 3 Aims and objectives

**3.1** The aims and objectives of homework are:

- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner;
- to promote a partnership between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

#### **4 Types of homework**

**4.1** We set a variety of homework activities. In the Infant Classes and in First Class we encourage the children to read by giving them books to take home to read with their parents. We give guidance information to parents to help them achieve the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child. We also ask First Class children to learn spellings or mathematical tables as part of their homework. Sometimes we ask children to talk about a topic at home prior to studying it in school. Sometimes we ask children to find and collect things that we then use in science lessons, and occasionally we ask children to take home work that they have started in school when we believe that they would benefit from spending further time on it. When we ask children to study a topic or to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use the school and local library and the Internet and CD-ROMs.

**4.2** In the upper classes we continue to give children the sort of homework activities outlined in paragraph 4.1 but we expect them to do more tasks independently. We set English and Maths homework routinely each week and we expect the children to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school through practice at home. We also set homework as a means of helping the children to revise for tests as well as to ensure that prior learning has been understood.

#### **5 Amount of homework**

**5.1** Homework is given on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. We occasionally give homework on a Friday. We increase the amount of homework that we give the children as they move through the school. As a general guideline we expect;

1<sup>st</sup> Class children to spend 15 minutes on their homework each night

2<sup>nd</sup> Class .....20 minutes

3<sup>rd</sup> Class .....30 minutes

4<sup>th</sup> /5<sup>th</sup> Classes.....30/40 minutes

6<sup>th</sup> Class.....40/50 minutes.

These times are approximate but should be spent working on homework and not preparing or searching for books or requisites.

**5.2** We run a Homework club after school Monday to Friday from 2.30 to 3.00, where teachers are available to help children who may be encountering difficulties. The home school Liaison teacher recommends children to the homework Club.

**5.3** We give all the children a school diary where they, or the teacher, or the learning support assistant (SNA) records the homework, and where parents and teachers make any relevant comments.

#### **6 Pupils with special educational needs**

**6.1** We set homework for all children as a normal part of school life. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child. If a child has special needs, we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. When setting homework to pupils who are named on the register of special needs, we refer to the Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

## **7 The role of parents**

**7.1** Parents have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this process. We ask parents to encourage their child to complete the homework tasks that are set. We invite them to help their children as they feel necessary and provide them with the sort of environment that allows children to do their best. Parents can support their child by providing a good working space at home, if possible away from the distraction of the T.V., by enabling their child to visit the library regularly, and by discussing the work that their child is doing.

**7.2** We ask parents to check the home/school diary daily and to sign it as requested.

**7.3** If parents have any problems, comments or questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. If their questions are of a more general nature, they should contact the Principal. Finally, if they wish to make a suggestion or complaint about the school homework policy or the way it is implemented, parents should contact the Principal and if necessary the Board of Management, through the Chairperson.

## **8 Monitoring and review**

**8.1** It is the responsibility of our Board of Management to agree and then monitor the school homework policy. They may, at any time, request from our Principal a report on the way homework is organised in our school.

**Signed:**

**Date: 16<sup>th</sup> October 2006.**

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Draft	Reviewed by	Date.	
1	B.O.M.	16 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2006.	