



Homework Policy

Introductory Statement

Homework is an integral link in the chain of communication between school and home. It helps parents monitor the progress of their child and provide support and encouragement where needed. This policy attempts to further strengthen positive home-school links through streamlining the assigning and completion of homework.

This policy has been formulated by staff with parental input and endorsed by the Board of Management. The parents were surveyed in November 2018. The children were involved in focus groups in May 2019. All these answers along with a teacher review of current practices have led to the formulation of this policy.

Summary of this Homework Policy

General	Homework is given to all classes Jnr/Snr infants - Homework given on sheets, 1st - 6th Homework written in journals
Skills	Homework skills are taught explicitly in September of each year
Timing	Homework is only given from Monday - Thursday (with a few exceptions for weekends) A maximum amount of time is outlined in this policy per night for each class
Content	Homework should only contain work which can be done at the child's individual level
Differentiation	Homework must be differentiated. This can be done through different work, different expectations, providing choice and open-ended/generic tasks
Checking homework	Checking homework is done in a way that is reasonable for the teacher.
Non-completion	The consequence for non-completion or partial completion should be a natural one i.e. it should be completed at another time (the following night, weekend etc.)

Rationale

- To further strengthen home-school links
- To maximise the benefit of homework to the child's learning
- To standardise the assigning of homework across year groups
- To ensure clarity as to the recommended time to be spent on homework
- To respond to parental concerns regarding the amount of time being spent on homework by some pupils and problems with the content

Relationship to School Ethos

Citywest & Saggart CNS seeks to enable each child to develop to his/her individual potential. It is the policy of the school, as far as it is possible, to identify all the needs of the pupil and put in place measures to adequately cater to their needs.

The school also encourages the active involvement of parents in enabling their children to take responsibility and work independently. The homework policy of this school aims to facilitate these ideals.

Aims and Objectives

The primary purposes of giving homework are:

- To practice and reinforce work at the child's level.
- To provide an opportunity for the child to work independently, develop study skills and develop self discipline.
- Provide a means by which the parent can see the sort of work that their child is doing in school, and this, in turn, will enable them to assess their progress.
- To engage parents as partners in their child's education in an active way and so become involved in their child's learning.

Guidelines for Teachers

What classes will get homework?

- All classes are assigned homework proportionate to their class level.
- Children attending withdrawal lessons with an SEN teacher will be assigned differentiated homework relevant to their needs by their SEN teacher. The class teacher, SEN teacher, and parents will decide whether class homework in the same subject should be completed or not.
- Children who are not assigned to an SEN teacher, but are achieving below the average class level, should be assigned differentiated homework by their class teacher.

How is homework communicated?

- JI-SI classes receive their homework printed on a homework sheet
- 1st-6th class write their homework down in homework journals
- SEN homework may be written in their SEN copy
- The assigned homework is explained to children in advance.

Teaching homework skills

- In September of every year, homework is completed in school time. The set time for homework is given and a standard of completion is established and set. This also allows the teacher to consider children in need of differentiated homework.
- Expectations are explained to the children.
- The children are taught what to do if they have a problem.
- The time-limits are explained to the children.

How often is homework given?

- Homework can be given from Monday to Thursday. This may be assigned daily or weekly at the teacher's discretion.
- Normally there is no homework on weekends or on a school day just before a public holiday. There are two exceptions :
 - if homework has been neglected during the week
 - in senior classes some project work is undertaken at weekends
- Incomplete homework may sometimes be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not done their homework, made a suitable effort or presented untidy work.
- There are occasions during the year when homework is not given:
 - Children receive no homework on their birthdays
 - If a child is out sick or on holidays, homework will not be given
 - In June, the emphasis is put on active/wellbeing based homework.
 - Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given "homework off" as a treat or as an acknowledgment of some special occasion.

What is the content of homework?

- Homework is generally based on class-related work or work already covered in class. The exercise should not involve any unfamiliar skills but should give children practice in using skills already taught in school.
- Although it should contain a balance between reading, learning, and writing, this balance is not always possible and can vary considerably from day to day.
- It should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.
- Homework is meant to be achievable by a child, i.e. it provides an opportunity to practice work already done. It is prepared by the teacher in class. However, sometimes with senior classes, some homework is 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. Project work is given a full calendar week or more to complete. The following are the allocations for our school –

Class	Maximum Time per day	Content
Junior Infants	10 mins	English and Maths
Senior Infants	15 mins	English and Maths
1 st Class	20mins	English and Maths
2 nd Class	20mins	English, Maths and Irish
3 rd Class	30mins	English, Maths, Gaeilge, Topical work based on themes
4 th Class	40mins	English, Maths, Gaeilge, Topical work based on themes
5 th Class	50mins	English, Maths, Gaeilge, Topical work based on themes
6 th Class	1hr	English, Maths, Gaeilge, Topical work based on themes

Themes at a year level will consult to ensure similar homework is been given by both teachers. **Maximum consideration will be given to differentiation. Differentiation can be given in the form of different worksheets/questions, choice and generic tasks etc.**

Checking homework:

- Ideally, teachers like to check homework on a daily basis but homework will be checked using different systems depending on the needs of the pupils. I.e a child who may need additional support could have work checked each day, whereas a child who is progressing well may only need work checked on a less regular basis.
- As children get older and learn to work independently, some items of homework are checked less often e.g. every second day or once per week.
- Some items of homework (and classwork) may be checked by children themselves under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children.
- If homework is not attempted/completed:
 - This will be excused if a note is received from the parent with a valid reason
 - If no note is received:
 - A verbal reminder is given to the child and they will complete it at an alternative time.
 - If this matter occurs more than once in a week or three separate weeks, the teacher will phone the parent to inform them.

Guidelines for Parents

How much time should be spent on homework?

The following are guidelines for the time spent at homework. Different children will complete the same homework at 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	0 - 10 minutes	3rd Class	Up to 30 minutes
Senior Infants	Up to 15 minutes	4th Class	Up to 40 minutes
1st class	Up to 20 minutes	5th Class	Up to 50 minutes
2nd class	Up to 20 minutes	6th Class	Up to 1 hour

When should homework be done?

- Each family situation is different (both 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

How much help should parents give?

- Parents should try to help their children with homework by:
 - providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework
 - to prevent interruptions or distractions, like T.V. or other children
- Children should do written homework themselves and parents should only help when the child has difficulty
- If a child has difficulty with homework, the parents should help the child to overcome the difficulty with further explanation or examples, but not by actually doing the homework for the child. In this case, the parent should write a note to the teacher explaining the problem.
- Shared reading is not homework in the regular sense and it is simply meant to be an enjoyable exercise between parent and child. If it's not enjoyable, shared reading should not be done.
- Parents should have a 'Homework Survival Kit': stock of pencils, rubbers, rulers, etc. available should the need arise.
- 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 to ensure this work is done well.

When should parents communicate with the teachers about homework?

Please send a note in to your teacher or speak to them at a suitable time:

- 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.

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.

Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their individual ability – no more, no less

Implementation

Implementation Date

This policy has been in operation in the school since October 2019.

Roles and Responsibilities / Implementation

All stakeholders have a role to play in the implementation of this policy especially pupils, parents and teaching staff.

Success Criteria

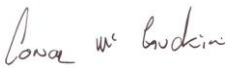

- Feedback from teachers, pupils, parents.
- Satisfactory homework exercises and assignments submitted by pupils

Ratification / Communication

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management in October 2019 and communicated to all parents.

Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended in the academic year 2022/2023 or sooner if required.

This policy was ratified by the school's Board of Management	
 Signed: Chairperson	 Signed: Principal
Date: 12.12.19	Date: 12.12.19