

# **HOMEWORK POLICY**



## **ST. BRIGID'S SENIOR GIRLS' NATIONAL SCHOOL**

### ■ **Introductory Statement and Rationale**

#### **(a) Introductory Statement**

This policy is a new revision of our school policy, which was developed over a number of years. This revised version was discussed and amended with the Teaching Staff, Parents' Focus Group, the In-School Management Team and the Board of Management.

#### **(b) Rationale**

- This policy should maximise the benefit of homework to the child's learning and promote positive home/school communication
- It is hoped that this school policy will be a useful tool for teachers, providing them with clear guidelines in the provision of homework and ensuring consistency and continuity in practice throughout the school
- That homework will be viewed as a reinforcement of work covered in school and a follow-up to school work on a given day

### ■ **Vision and Aims**

#### **(a) Vision**

Our vision in St Brigid's S.G.N.S. is that pupils might be developed holistically. We would like to promote education as an ongoing aim, both in school and at home. We recognise the importance of homework as a tool in life-long learning and encourage the pupils to realise that learning is not confined to school.

#### **(b) Aims**

In providing homework we aim:

- To promote positive attitudes and develop an appreciation of the value of work covered in class
- To encourage pupils' independence and develop study skills
- To help revise and reinforce work covered in class
- To promote a similar approach in all classes
- To encourage home-school links
- To enable parents and teachers to discover difficulties which pupils are experiencing at a given time

# Guidelines

## Frequency of homework given

- Reading, spellings and tables homework is given Monday-Thursday inclusive.
- Written English and Maths homework is optional. Teachers may set written homework in English and Maths but completion of this by children is optional.
- Homework will be put up on Aladdin.

### *Exceptions:*

- If homework has been neglected during the week
- If a child earns a “Homework Pass” through the Code of Behaviour System, (or through Peer Tutoring or any similar initiative), they will have an evening off homework (written homework only). The day/date will be specified on the homework pass
- Pupils may also be given a Homework Pass on their birthday, for winning Class of the Month or on special occasions

## Content of Homework

Homework is generally comprised of a mixture of reading, memorising and writing. Assignments may include reading, spelling, tables, written work, poetry, S.E.S.E. lists to be learned (e.g. counties), drawing/colouring, collecting information and completing work set in class. Children may also be encouraged to undertake interviews, research, construct or gather materials for a specific purpose.

The tasks given will reflect work covered that day/week and so will vary. It is emphasised that oral homework is as important as written homework. Memorisation requires the full support and cooperation of a guiding adult, whether acting as an audience or just to check how well something has been learned. This can often be done informally, around the home, on the way to the shops, in the car, etc. Children often feel that reading and memorisation is not important, whereas this is often of more long-term value.

## Duration of Homework

Each child works at his/her own pace. Therefore, it can be difficult to set hard and fast times for homework. The following are guidelines for time allotted to homework, allowing room for flexibility. Time taken will vary from day to day and depend on the stage of the school year.

2<sup>nd</sup> Class 15-25 mins

3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Class 25-40 mins

5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Class 35-50 mins

Reading for recreation is obviously not included in these times

*Parents should write a note to inform the teacher when children are exceeding the specified times.*

## Teachers

- Assign homework, review the tasks set and provide feedback to students
- Differentiate homework, where necessary or appropriate, according to interest or ability
- Monitor homework to maintain standards, provide response to pupils and identify pupils experiencing difficulties
- Keep parents up to date where there is, or has been, a problem with incomplete homework

## Pupils

- Take care to write homework tasks clearly and accurately in homework journal
- Bring home whatever books, copies and workbooks are needed
- Complete oral and written homework assignments to the best of their ability
- Present clearly dated written work neatly

## **Parents**

- Promote a positive attitude towards all aspects of homework
- Decide on a suitable time for homework, to develop good, regular, work habits
- Provide a quiet place, with a proper work surface (table, counter...). Where possible, keep free from distractions such as T.V.
- Encourage children to organise themselves well, with necessary books and materials
- Encourage independence, only assisting whenever necessary
- Promote good presentation and neatness *within a reasonable timeframe*
- Check tests / written quizzes regularly
- Sign written homework / tests / homework sheets
- Communicate any difficulties completing homework to the teacher by email.
- Time spent on homework should not be excessive. Where a parent/guardian considers that the child has made his/her best effort and is unable to continue, the parent/guardian should sign the child's work and note the time spent
- Check that your child has packed all the necessary books, journals, copies, pencils, P.E. equipment, etc. for the following school day

## **Monitoring Homework**

Teachers generally check homework on a daily basis. In senior classes, with a larger volume of work, it is not always possible for a teacher to check each child's journal every day. Older children may themselves be requested to check answers, under the guidance of the teacher. This is a valuable exercise in promoting responsibility and confidence. Teachers will themselves also continue to monitor this homework.

Many teachers operate a reward system for pupils who demonstrate a consistently good effort in completing their homework assignments.

When homework is incomplete or to a poor standard, the pupil may be requested to complete that homework that evening along with her current day's homework. Alternatively, where this has happened on more than one occasion, the pupil concerned may miss a class reward time (e.g. *Golden Time*). Parents will be contacted by the class teacher when homework is regularly incomplete or to a poor standard. If the situation continues, with the matter unresolved, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Principal, who will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s). A meeting will then be arranged to discuss how the matter might best be resolved.

## **Where homework is a problem**

- Always make an effort. Try your best
- Ask for help at home
- If a problem is encountered, or homework is not completed, parents/guardians send the teacher an email explaining the problem.
- Pupils also tell the teacher the following day
- Teachers remind pupils about this Homework Policy, where necessary or appropriate
- Policy to be included in new homework journals and to be given to parents at formal Parent/Teacher meetings

## **■ Success Criteria**

- The success of this policy will be judged in the following ways
  - Quality of homework will be evaluated regularly
  - Improvement in homework should be clearly discernible
  - Feedback
    - Parents: notes in journal, oral feedback in P/T meetings

- Pupils: pupil discussions re. homework issues
- Teachers: A variety of appropriate, differentiated homework is assigned.  
Discussion at Staff Meetings

## ■ Implementation

### **(a) *Roles and Responsibilities***

- The teaching staff will implement this policy with the support of the Board of Management, Pupils and Parents

### **(b) *Timeframe***

- It is envisaged that the policy will be implemented in the current school term

## ■ Review

### **(a) *Roles and Responsibilities***

- It will be necessary to review this policy on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation
- Those involved in the review will include:
  - *School staff*
  - *BOM*
  - *Parents*

### **(b) *Timeframe***

- This policy will be reviewed when necessary and will be discussed at a Staff Meeting and in a Parents' Focus Group

## ■ Ratification and Communication

- The original Homework Policy was created in 2012 and reviewed and ratified annually. This version of the policy was reviewed at the October staff and Board of Management meeting.
- The Homework Policy will be made available to view at the school by parents. A copy will be given to parents at P/T meetings and newcomer parents upon enrolment.