



Stepaside Educate Together National School Homework Policy

Rationale:

Homework fosters independence, self-reliance, self-esteem, co-operation and responsibility for life-long learning. It is an essential part of primary education as it re-enforces what children learn in school. It provides a link between teacher and parent and encourages parental involvement in their child's education. In general, homework is meant to be achievable by a child working on their own to the best of their ability. However it can be a valuable opportunity for parents to provide 1 to 1 support to their child in areas where they need it. 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.

Content

Homework will usually contain a balance of tasks, including reading tasks, learning tasks, and written tasks, drawing/colouring, collecting information, active homework and ethical education homework.

Parents can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned, ensuring that work is done well. Homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work. All pupils are encouraged to read in their own time every day and daily reading with a parent is encouraged. We encourage pupils and parents to value reading materials other than the class reader at home. A range of reading materials is much more beneficial than an over-reliance on one genre or type of reading.

How often is homework given?

Each teacher has their own homework system and this will be discussed at the class meeting with the parents/guardians at the start of the year. Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays. Homework will not be given to children who miss school or for short-term illnesses or holidays.

Recommended time for homework

The following are general guidelines for time to be spent on homework. As the child progresses through the school the time spent on homework will increase. It is important to remember it is the *quality* not the *quantity* of homework that matters. The focus is on the effort put in by the child. It is also important to note that if homework is causing your child stress or it is taking longer than the recommended length of time please inform your child's teacher.

*JI and SI	10-15 minutes
First and Second class	Up to 30 minutes
Third and Fourth class	30-45 minutes
Fifth and Sixth class	Up to 1 hour

*Note that homework for junior infants begins after the October mid-term break.

Pupils

There is an Educate Together homework diary in operation from first class onwards. This is used by the class teacher and parents as a good communication tool between the home and the school. Pupils should endeavour to enter homework accurately in homework diary (where applicable). They should ensure that they take home relevant books and copies. They should complete homework assignments to the best of their ability.

How often do teachers monitor homework?

Ideally teachers like to check homework on a daily basis. However with a large class this is not always possible. 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.

The following 'homework tips' may be useful for parents / guardians:

- Establish a timed homework routine.
- Set aside a regular place and suitable chair and table.
- Encourage your child to keep books and copies clean and tidy.
- Encourage independent work but try and be available to help if needed and also show interest in what is being done.
- Praise your child's efforts and ask him/her their opinions / views.
- If you are working with your child and you feel yourself becoming impatient, stop.
- Prevent interruptions and distractions like TV, toys, radio.
- Have resources such as pencils and colours readily available.

What happens if homework is not completed?

Homework is valued as an important part of a child's education. Parents will be informed if homework is not completed on a regular basis. Non-completion of homework is deemed unacceptable behaviour (see Code of Behaviour policy document). However there are always some exceptions to this e.g. family events, tiredness and sickness.

This policy was drafted in January 2016 and was approved by the staff at their meeting on 26th January 2016 and later ratified by the Board of Management. This policy will be reviewed as required but no longer than 3 years from the date of drafting.

Signed: _____

Aidan Gallagher, Chairperson of the Board of Management SETNS

Date: _____