

The background is a solid yellow color. Scattered across the yellow background are numerous white, rectangular shapes that resemble torn pieces of paper or sticky notes. These shapes are irregularly placed, some overlapping, and some appearing as if they are peeling away from the surface. They are distributed around the perimeter of the white text area.

**St. Mary's National  
School**

**Homework Policy**

## **Why give homework?**

To re-inforce what the child learns during the day.

To provide a link between teacher and parent.

To develop a child's concentration skills and develop a work ethic.

Homework is meant to be achievable by a child i.e. it provides an opportunity to practise work already done. It is normally 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.

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

## **How often is homework given?**

Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays. An exception to this rule may be:

If homework has been neglected during the week/if a student wishes to complete research in relation to project work..

Please note extra homework may be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not done homework, made a suitable effort or presented untidy work.

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

## **What is the content of homework?**

Ideally homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks.

This balance is not always possible and can vary considerably from day to day. However, it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.

Homework will focus on consolidating work covered in class that week and may also include independent research work.

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.

## **How much time for 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 only:

**Junior Infants:** 0 - 10 minutes

**Senior Infants:** Up to 15 minutes

**Rang 1st, 2nd & 3rd:** Up to 30 minutes

**Rang 4th, 5th, & 6th:** 50 minutes to 1 hour

Homework is given from Monday to Thursday. Normally there is no homework at weekends except if homework has been neglected during the week/if a student wishes to complete research in relation to project work.

## **How much help should parent 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 (such as electronic devices 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.

## **How often should parents monitor homework?**

Parents should check and sign a child's homework journal every evening.

The pupil's journal is an important record of the child's homework. It is also a valuable means of communication between parents and teachers. Doubts or queries that you may have can be dealt with here rather than having to meet class teacher for every little concern.

Ideally, all written messages regarding homework should be put in the homework journal (additional pages available at the end of the journal).

Please check that your child records his / her homework neatly in the correct page and ticks each item of homework when completed. Please do not sign homework if you feel that your child hasn't made a proper effort or has not fully completed homework.

It is important that parents give children a positive view of homework rather than a chore to be completed in order to keep teacher happy.

Homework will not be given for sick leave absences (unless in exceptional circumstances/lengthy period of illness). It is the view of the school that if a pupil is not well enough to attend school on a given day, then there should be no expectation to complete homework.

If parents are planning a holiday during the school term, we ask that they make contact with the class teacher in advance to notify them of this absence. No work will be assigned for such absences.

## **How often do teachers monitor homework?**

Teachers like to check homework on a regular basis.

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.

## **When should parents communicate with the teachers about homework?**

If your child cannot do homework due to family circumstances. However a note stating merely that “your child was away” will not be accepted.

If the time being spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time.

## **When should homework be done?**

Each family situation is different - both parents working, child minders etc.

Ideally, homework should be done before any screen time soon after school while your child is still fresh, however, some children need a break before starting home work.

Homework should never be left until morning time before school.

Teachers will not accept scribbling or untidy homework.

## 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. Homework should be completed by pupil in order to develop concentration skills, re-inforce material learned during the school day and to enhance child's educational well-being.

## Homework Club

St. Mary's National School is involved in the Stranorlar School Completion Programme. There are numerous benefits of being part of this programme but one of them is the *Homework Club* which has been set up in recent years. Pupils attending homework club will be identified by teachers as those who would benefit most from one to one tuition. Instruction will be targeted to individual needs and abilities. Tuition may take place in the morning or directly after school. Pupils are also given a breakfast/hot snack.

## Approved and Ratified

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson (Board of Management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson (Parents' Association)