

St. Benedict's National School

Homework Policy



Policy Introduction

Children are given homework which is work that supports and complements the work being carried out at school. This policy was written by the principal in conjunction with the teaching staff. The homework policy of St. Benedict's N.S. works in tandem with all other existing policies of the school.

The type of homework and amount will vary from time to time and from class to class but will increase as the child progresses through the school. Individual class teachers will correspond with parents outlining details.

Parents are encouraged to help their children to develop a positive approach to homework by setting aside a time in the day when they can complete their tasks.

Homework is set as a way of informing and involving parents in their child's learning process, as well as enjoying activities and having fun.

All pupils are encouraged to read in their own time every day. From an early age they will bring home their reading books the school hopes that parent and child will share the excitement of reading books together.

Parents are also encouraged to spend time allowing and supporting children to develop life skills by encouraging them to read things around them e.g. labels, street signs etc as well as writing letters, stories, notes, lists and familiarise themselves with every day maths. This is supported and reinforced by staff during school time.

Homework assignments in English and Mathematics and Gaeilge are given on a regular basis with particular emphasis on spellings and tables. Once again parental help with the learning of spelling and number patterns is much valued and has a noticeable impact on children's learning.

Recommended Daily Homework

Class	Time
Junior Infants and Senior Infants	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

It is really important to us that homework does not place a huge burden of stress on families and children. The time allocated to homework should be in line with the table above and if it is taking longer than this and causing children to be upset, please write a note in the homework journal or on Aladdin and we will fully accept that your child has completed their homework to the best of their ability on that day.

How often is homework given?

- Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays.
- Homework continues until the end of each term and until two weeks before the end of summer term.
- 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.
- Please note extra homework may sometimes be given during the week if a child has not done homework, has not made a suitable effort or has presented careless/untidy work.

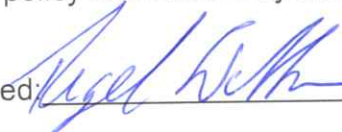
What is the content of homework?


- Homework assignments may involve research, writing, reading or learning and should be completed on time.
- Learning homework is just as important as written assignments and adequate time should be devoted to learning assignments
- Homework assignments will be recorded in the pupil's homework journal from First to Sixth class. The journal will also act as a form of communication

between the home and the class. It is important to inform the class teacher if a child is having difficulty with homework or if homework has not been completed on a specific day due to unavoidable circumstances.

- Reading with a parent on a daily basis is to be encouraged.
- There is a homework diary in operation from first class onwards and parents sign this diary along with the amount of time it has taken the child to complete their homework. This is used by the class teacher and parents as a good communication tool between the home and the school.

This policy was ratified by staff and board of management on 10/11/24.

Signed:  (Chairperson of Board of

Management) Signed:  (Principal)

Homework Help

Below is an outline of some helpful strategies and practical tips for reducing homework issues with your child. As we all know, the challenges associated with 'homework time' vary based on a family's circumstances and the fact that every child is different and unique in their own way.

However, the advice below is based on the experiences of parents, teachers and children so hopefully some parents might find it useful.

Routine, Consistency and a quiet space

The earlier the better

- A quick snack and straight into it. This helps to avoid the inevitable distractions and tiredness that occurs as the evening progresses.

A homework friendly space:

- Try to have a quiet space available for your child where they do their homework at the same time every day. The space can include a pencil case so they don't waste time searching for resources.

Ditch the devices!

- Smartphones, tablets, tv etc. are hugely distracting for children. Keeping them out of arms reach will really help your child focus on their homework and get it done much quicker.

Organisation is half the battle

- Talk to your child about what they can do to be more organised with their homework both at home and in school.

How to Help

Support

- Remember your role is not to teach your child new topics during homework time. Homework should be about revising topics already covered in class so it's all about your child feeling supported.

Organisation

- Show your child to be well organised and prepared.

Encouragement

- Encourage them to try their best and praise effort as opposed to just the outcome (Carol Dweck, The Growth Mindset).
- Positive reinforcement and parental acknowledgment means a lot to children.

Keep a consistent eye on it

- Check to make sure homework has been completed. If it hasn't it may be that a topic is too difficult so this should be communicated to the child's teacher.

Take a breath

- Children feed off our energy so try to stay calm and positive.

Know when it's time to wave the white flag (temporarily)

- Remember quality is more important than quantity!
- Dr Cathy Vatterott has spent over twenty years studying the topic of homework. One of her conclusions has been that there is no significant correlation between the time a primary school child spends doing homework and academic achievement once a certain amount of time has passed.
- Children's concentration levels will only sustain so much information after a day at school. This may change at second-level but quality is always more important.
- Sometimes it's just not worth it. A brief note in the diary explaining to the teacher that your child found the homework difficult can be much more beneficial than spending hours agonising over a piece of work.

Making a good start with younger children

- Reading and phonological development is the most important area for a child making a good start in school. Spending 10 minutes every evening listening to your child read, practicing sounds, or reading to them can make a significant difference to a child's early experience of school. There is consistent research demonstrating a strong relationship between a child's love of reading and overall academic achievement. Try to find books that they enjoy so they will want to read more.

New maths methods

- Some aspects of maths are taught differently than when many parents were in school. Google and YouTube can be your friend here but a simple example from the child's teacher in a copy can work just as well. Math's methods are learned over time in school and usually revised regularly so think about it as a long term process.

Gaeilge

- You're not expected to be a Gaeilgoir! A lot of children enjoy the experience of learning new Irish words and phrases 'with' their parent.
- The most important thing is to be positive about your child learning the language. Children also love teaching their parent something, so let them teach you a couple of words a week. "Teach once learn twice"
- An online dictionary is always handy (<https://www.focloir.ie/>)

Useful Websites for Parents

General

scoilnet.ie

The official Department of Education website which provides information for all subjects within the curriculum broken down by class level.

schooldays.ie

General help with homework and your child's learning. Broken down by age which makes it easily accessible.

Literacy

[http://www.helpmykidlearn.ie/-](http://www.helpmykidlearn.ie/)

Includes audio and video content to support parents with literacy difficulties and links to others websites providing more detailed information on specific topics. The site is

designed for parents, grandparents and carers of children aged 0 – 12 years.

[starfall.com](https://www.starfall.com)

An interactive learn-to-read website aimed at children who are beginning to read at around 4 to 5 years old.

Reading

[bear.org](https://www.bear.org)

Developed to help kids learn up to 1,200 vocabulary terms. Based on phonics it uses quizzes, presentations and reviews to help kids remember words from first sounds to more longer and difficult words.

Maths

[khanacademy.com](https://www.khanacademy.com)

A free website which allows your child to move through maths at their own pace and gain points/virtual prizes as they proceed. Each section includes instructional videos for when your child needs help with a question. Highly recommended!

[trigg4tables.com](https://www.trigg4tables.com)

A simple site which allows children to practice their times tables independently

[ixl.com](https://www.ixl.com)

This website is directly aligned to the Irish primary, Junior Cert and Leaving Cert curriculums (unlike Khan Academy), offering endless practice problems and exercises.

Gaeilge

[cula4.com](https://www.cula4.com)

TG4 setup this fantastic website which includes a section for children. The section includes Gaeilge games, cartoons and competitions. The website also includes a

number of learning apps to help children experience Gaeilge in a fun and interactive way.

Duolingo

A really popular app for children and adults. Allows for the gradual, daily learning of new vocabulary. This app could be a really nice way for a parent to learn some Gaeilge with their child in only 5 minutes per day.

easyirish.com

This website aims to teach the language in a fun and easy way. It includes free podcasts covering a wide range of subjects including likes and dislikes, numbers, days of the week etc. The games, dictionaries and Irish resources are also very good.