**ST. PATRICK’S PRIMARY SCHOOL, HILLTOWN**



**Homework policy**

**APRIL 2021**

**Progress through partnership**

**Introduction**

This Homework Policy has been prepared in consultation with staff, parents, children and Governors. Our school motto is ‘Progress through Partnership’ and we are keenly aware that when children, parents and teachers work together in partnership, the homework process is much more effective. We therefore encourage parental involvement in the home-school tasks and recognise the important role parents have in supporting their children’s learning. We are grateful for the ongoing support and involvement of parents with the school. If parents have any queries or concerns with regard to the Homework Policy, please do not hesitate to contact the principal.

Homework is any work or activities which pupils are asked to do outside lesson time, either on their own or with parental support. It presents excellent opportunities for parents to become active partners in supporting learning. Homework should be a positive experience for the child and for the parents. Homework set in St Patrick’s Primary School will reflect the aims of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. It will also promote reading for enjoyment and the development of independent reading skills. We view homework as an important part of a good education and a prerequisite for raising standards within the school.

**The Value of Homework**

There are many reasons for giving homework:

* Homework gives parents an insight into the type and the range of activities in which children are engaged in school;
* Homework facilitates the use of resources for learning which exist beyond the school environment;
* Homework provides an opportunity to reinforce, practise and/or consolidate concepts and skills introduced in class;
* Homework provides an opportunity to prepare for further work which will be explored in school;
* Homework allows children to engage with their parents in a range of activities, some of which may be of a practical nature;
* Homework helps children to become more independent and to develop responsibility for their work.

**What the school does:**

We provide a ‘Weekly Homework Page’ for all pupils in P.1 – P.7. This clearly outlines all the written tasks and learning tasks for the week and, in Foundation Stage, provides clear guidance for parents as to how they can support their child in these tasks.

We provide homework each night, Monday to Thursday. If a special event is happening and there is no homework as a result, this will be clearly indicated on the weekly homework page.

We provide homework which is differentiated, where necessary, taking into account the range of pupil capabilities, in order to provide an appropriate challenge for individual children.

We explain the homework clearly to children.

We provide varied homework in a range of formats.

We mark all homework. In P.1 – P.3 this is done by an adult. In P.4 – P.7 pupils will correct their own homework in class, under the guidance of the teacher and an adult will check all homework on a regular basis, at least weekly.

We provide prompt written or oral feedback on homework to help pupils improve.

We provide samples of classwork and homework for pupils who are off school for an extended period due to illness, if requested by parents.

We DO NOT provide classwork and/or homework for children who are taken out of school to go on holiday during term time.

**What we expect from pupils:**

Pupils are expected to complete their homework to the best of their ability.

Pupils are expected to check over their work, and where necessary, self-correct mistakes.

Pupils are expected to present their homework neatly and bring it to school on time.

Pupils are expected to read every night and spend time learning spellings and tables.

**What we expect from parents:**

All pieces of homework, including the Reading Record Book, will be signed by parents.

Parents will make it clear to pupils how much they value homework and will support the school in explaining how it can help the children’s learning.

Parents will encourage the development of children’s reading skills by reading to their children, reading with their children and listening to their children read.

Parents will show interest in children’s homework and praise them when they make a good effort.

Parents will write a short note to the teacher if homework is causing friction in the home or if the child is taking much longer than the recommended time to finish their homework.

**Choosing a place and time for homework:**

Children may need time to talk and relax immediately after school and a break between school work and homework is important. However, we would recommend that homework is not left until last thing at night because the children will be tired and this may impact negatively on the quality of the homework and the enjoyment of the tasks.

Try to complete homework with as little distraction as possible, ideally on a clear working area (desk or table) and with no television, computer or other background noise.

Young children will need supervision for all of their homework. From P.4 upwards it is important to encourage independence but the level of independence will differ from child to child. Children need to feel supported in the homework process.

Learning homework is as important as the written and reading tasks and children will need encouragement and support in learning phonic sounds, spellings and times tables.

**Approximate duration of homework:**

P.1 and P.2: 15 – 30 minutes

P.3 and P.4: 30 – 40 minutes

P.5: 45 minutes – 1 hour

P.6 and P.7: 1 – 1½ hours (approximately)

**Homework for the Foundation Stage (Primary 1 and 2)**

Your child will normally have the following homework:

**Reading:** Every night (at the start of P.1 the parent will read to the child, then the child will receive a Reading Record and a Reading book)

**Writing:** At least once a week

**Spelling:** P.2 pupils have approximately 10 – 15 spellings weekly

**Mathematics:** At least once a week

**The World Around Us** As topics are covered in class

(History, Geography & Science)

**The Arts:** As topics are covered in class

(Music, Art & Drama)

**Religion:** Grow in Love Resources

**Active Learning:** Active Learning is important so some homework may not be written. Pupils may be required to research topics or bring in items for class discussions or investigations, eg. cuttings from magazines or photographs

**Extra Reading Materials**

**Library Books**: Children will be able to access a wide range of fiction and non-fiction

books from their classroom library.

There is no written homework at weekends for P.1 and P.2 children but we recommend that children continue with their independent reading over the weekend.

Please ensure that the Reading Record book and all written homework tasks are signed by a parent.

It may be helpful to note on your child’s homework the length of time it took them to complete.

**Optional Computer-based work at home:**

The school has purchased ICT programmes which can be used at home to provide extra support for children in developing skills and reinforcing concepts already taught in school. These include: Lexia (Literacy support), IXL English and IXL Maths.

**Homework for Key Stage One (Primary 3 and 4)**

Your child will normally have the following homework:

**Reading:** Every night (recorded in the Reading Record)

**English:** Written homework twice a week

**Spelling:** Approximately 10 – 20 each week

**Mathematics:** Mental Maths – daily focus

Written homework twice a week

**The World Around Us** As topics are covered in class

(History, Geography & Science)

**The Arts:** As topics are covered in class

(Music, Art & Drama)

**Religion:** Grow in Love Resources

Class Prayers

**Active Learning:** Active Learning is important so some homework may not be written. Pupils may be required to research topics or bring in items for class discussions or investigations, eg. information from magazines, internet research or photographs

**Extra Reading Materials**

**Library Books**: Children will be able to access a wide range of fiction and non-fiction

books from their classroom library or the school library.

There is no written homework at weekends for P.3 and P.4 children but we recommend that children continue with their independent reading over the weekend.

Please ensure that the Reading Record book and all written homework tasks are signed by a parent.

**Optional Computer-based work at home:**

The school has purchased ICT programmes which can be used at home to provide extra support for children in developing skills and reinforcing concepts already taught in school. These include: Lexia (Literacy support), IXL English and IXL Maths.

**Homework for Key Stage Two (Primary 5 – Primary 7)**

Your child will normally have the following homework:

**Reading:** Pupils have a reading book and should read every night and weekend as directed by the class teacher. Pupils also need to do further reading for enjoyment. We support this extra reading through the promotion of the Accelerated Reading Programme in school and at home.

**English:** Written homework daily

**Spelling:** There is a weekly sound. 15 words with this sound are learnt each week. Five unfamiliar words with the same sound are tested each week.

**Mathematics:** Mental Maths – weekly focus

Written homework daily

**The World Around Us** As topics are covered in class

(History, Geography & Science)

**The Arts:** As topics are covered in class

(Music, Art & Drama)

**Religion:** Grow in Love Resources

Class Prayers

**Active Learning:** Active Learning is important so some homework may not be written. Pupils may be required to research topics or bring in items for class discussions or investigations, for example, information from magazines, internet research or photographs

**Extra Reading Materials**

**Library Books**: Children will be able to access a wide range of fiction and non-fiction

books from their classroom library or the school library.

 Please ensure that the Reading Record book and all written homework tasks are signed by

 a parent.

**Optional Computer-based work at home:**

The school has purchased ICT programmes which can be used at home to provide extra support for children in developing skills and reinforcing concepts already taught in school. These include: Lexia (Literacy support), IXL English, IXL Maths and Accelerated Reading.

**Monitoring and Review of Homework Policy**

This Homework Policy has been reviewed and updated after consultation with children, parents, staff and the Board of Governors. Effectiveness of this Policy will be monitored by the Leadership Team. Parental feedback, children’s feedback, staff feedback and Governors’ feedback will be sought as part of any further review of the Homework Policy.