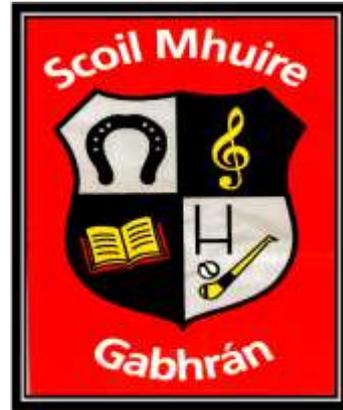


Homework Policy



Homework is part of a continuous learning process and in Gowran N.S. we regard homework as important for the following reasons:

- 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
- It also enables the teacher:
 - to monitor pupil progress with a view to improving standards
 - to provide pupils and parents with clear and relevant feedback
 - to suggest strategies for improvement and goals to be achieved.

Homework, along with schoolwork, teacher observation, projects, portfolios, diagnostic and standardised tests all lay the foundation for providing an overall picture of the pupil's progress and development as they move through the school.

However, international research has shown that the impact of homework on pupil achievement is far less than one would expect. Furthermore, the frustration experienced in many busy households, spending exorbitant amounts of time completing homework tasks can be counter-productive. We believe that homework has a place as long as it's meaningful and relevant.

How often is homework given?

- Homework is given on Monday to Thursday leaving the weekend free.
- Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given "Homework off" as a treat or as an acknowledgment of some special occasion. Individual pupils may also earn a "Homework Pass" as a reward for effort or achievement.

What is the content of homework?

Since 2018, we have reduced the amount of written work and are focusing primarily on reading, spelling and tables tasks.

Daily homework for the children from 1st to 6th classes will consist of the following:

Reading, spelling activities, tables and a small amount of written maths to consolidate the concepts being taught. Project work will be assigned occasionally to encourage independent learning and to develop research, presentation skills and ICT skills etc.

We hope that less writing and concentration on smaller, more focused tasks will be more meaningful and, above all, allow more time for your child to read, play and enjoy extra-curricular activities.

We ask you to continue to support your child's learning through involvement in their homework activities and to sign the homework journal on completion. As always, if you have any concerns, please make an appointment with the class teacher who will be happy to discuss the matter with you.

- 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.
- Children are encouraged to read for pleasure every day and parents are encouraged to read to younger children daily also.

- The nature of homework assigned will inevitably change during such times as Book Week, Maths Week, Christmas, Confirmation, First Communion etc.

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	10- 15 minutes
Senior Infants	Up to 20 minutes
Rang 1/2	Up to 30 minutes
Rang 3/4	Up to 40 minutes
Rang 5/6	Up to 60 minutes

How much help should parents give?

We ask parents to support our homework policy by:

- Providing children with a suitable place and time to do their homework and to prevent interruptions or distractions, like T.V. or other children
- Allowing children to 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
- Regularly checking memorization of spellings and tables

How often should parents monitor homework?

- Parents should check and sign a child's homework diary every evening
- Children in junior classes take home what they need in a homework folder.
- Pupils from First Class to Sixth Class are encouraged to write down their homework clearly in their homework diary and to tick off items as they are completed. Pupils are also encouraged to take responsibility for bringing home daily what they need to complete their homework. Books not required are left in school to help cut down on the weight of their schoolbags.
- 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
- Ideally, all written messages to your child's teacher should be put in the homework journal (additional pages available at the end of the journal)
- Occasionally, letters, forms, fliers etc. are placed in the current day of the homework diary. Please check your child's diary for such notes on a regular basis.

How often do teachers monitor homework?

Ideally teachers like to check homework on a daily basis. However with large class numbers it is not always possible to check each child's homework diary every day. As children get older and learn to work independently, some items of homework are checked less often and 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?

- When your child cannot do homework due to family circumstances

- When your child cannot do homework because she/he cannot understand some aspect
- If the time being spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time.
- Every effort should be made to catch up on homework that has been missed.

When should homework be done?

- Each family situation is different - both parents working, child minders, etc. Ideally, homework should be done before any television is watched soon after school while your child is still fresh, however, some children need a break before starting homework
- Homework should never be left until morning time before school

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 for absent children

Following a request from a parent/guardian for a teacher to prepare work for a child who is absent for a period of more than one week, the following procedures apply:

- If the child is absent due to illness, the class teacher will endeavour to provide some work in order to ensure the child will not be too far behind class work on his/her return
- If the absence is due to holidays or other similar events then the advice is that the child should read during the time off.

At all times it is school policy to encourage children to attend school every day where possible, in this way all children will receive an equal opportunity to learn.