

St. Peter's National School

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St. Peter's N.S. Homework policy

◆ Necessity for Homework

Homework is an essential part of school life and is necessary in order to reinforce what has been taught in class during the day. It also helps to provide a link between the child's teacher and his / her parents. It has also been shown that homework develops a child's concentration skills and work ethic.

Homework is meant to be achievable by a child, i.e. it provides an opportunity to practice work already carried out in class. It is normally prepared by the child's teacher. At times some homework is designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity.

Pupils are always expected to do their homework to the best of their individual ability.

◆ Frequency of Homework

Homework is given from Monday to Thursday but not on Fridays. There are, however, two exceptions:

- (a) If homework has been neglected during the week,
- (b) Senior pupils may have to carry out some project work / revision at weekends.

Occasionally, at the discretion of the class teacher or principal, children are given "homework off" as a treat or as an acknowledgement of some special event.

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

◆ Content of Homework

Ideally homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks. However this balance is not always possible and can vary from day to day. Further, it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.

Homework will regularly contain reading, spelling, tables, written work, pieces to be "learned by heart", drawing / colouring, collecting information / items and finishing work started in class. Children frequently feel that reading and "learning by heart" is not real homework. Parents can play an important role in listening to reading and material to be learned ensuring that this is done well.

◆ Time spent doing 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 school year. It is important to remember that it is the quality and not the quantity of homework that matters.

The following are guidelines only

- ◆ Junior Infants – Senior Infants: 10-20 mins.
- ◆ First Class - Second Class: 20-40 mins.
- ◆ Third Class – Fourth Class : 40-60 mins.
- ◆ Fifth Class – Sixth Class: 1hour – 1hour 30mins

◆ **How can parents help?**

Parents should check and sign the homework journal each evening. This 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 a child's teacher should be put in the homework journal.

Children should record their homework neatly on the correct page and tick each item of homework when completed. Textbooks and copies should also be kept clean and tidy.

Information notes and letters to parents are folded and are placed in the current day of the homework journal. Parents should check the journal for such notes on a regular basis.

◆ **Monitoring of Homework by Class Teacher.**

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 everyday. As children get older and learn to work independently, some items of homework are checked less often, e.g. every second or third day. Some items of homework may be checked by the pupils themselves under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children.

◆ **Communicating with teachers about Homework.**

Parents should write a note in the child's homework journal when;

1. The child cannot complete their homework due to family circumstances.
2. The child cannot complete their homework because he / she cannot understand some aspect.
3. The time being spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount time.

◆ **The best time to do Homework.**

Each family situation is different – both parents working, child minders, etc. Ideally, homework should be done soon after arriving home from school while children are still fresh. It is recommended that children take a short break after school, have a snack and then attempt their homework. Homework should never be left until morning time before school.