

*St Joseph's
National School
Rehins, Ballina,
Co. Mayo*



School Homework Policy

Rationale:

Homework fosters independence, self-reliance, self-esteem, co-operation, responsibility and lifelong learning. It is an essential part of primary education as it re-enforces what children learn in school. It provides a link between teacher and parent and encourages parental involvement in their child's education.

In general, homework is meant to be achievable by a child working on his/her own to the best of his/her ability. However, there is also times when homework will require a parent to "work with" their child to complete a task. It is normally prepared by the teacher in class. It can be used to practice what is done in school or can be designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity.

How often is homework given?

Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children may be given a 'homework pass' as a treat or as an acknowledgment of some special occasion or achievement.

Homework content?

Usually, homework contains 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 regularly contain reading, spellings, tables, written work, pieces to be 'learned by heart', drawing/colouring, collecting information/items and finishing work started in class. Parents can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned, ensuring this work is done well.

Reading:

Children will have reading each night (Monday to Thursday) as part of their homework. This will take the form of either a class level text, individual ability-based text or both. Reading can be given in both English and Irish from junior infants. Do we want this? Add any amendments! Please note that parents are responsible for ensuring that reading books are not damaged and returned to school each day in good condition. Damaged or lost books

must be replaced by parents. In some cases, it is not possible to replace an individual book and a new set of books will have to be purchased by the parent in question.

Duration of 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 it is the quality and not the quantity of homework that matters. The following are general guidelines:

- Infant classes – up to 20 minutes
- 1st & 2nd class – up to 30 minutes
- 3rd & 4th class – up to 45 minutes
- 5th & 6th class – up to 60 minutes

(If a child has spent the recommended time working on homework, parents may “sign off” if they feel the work assigned is too difficult or taking too much time)

Homework is differentiated for pupils with additional educational needs. Homework may be assigned by both the class teacher and/or learning support teacher following collaboration between them and the parent.

Children who are entitled to assistive technology must share their homework on their allocated google account throughout the week, this is done automatically through a shared folder. It is the responsibility of the child to ensure files are saved in the correct folder. Children must print the homework from the week by Friday to bring to the class teacher for correction.

Pupils should:

- Enter homework accurately in homework diaries
- Ensure they take home relevant books and copies
- Complete homework assignments to the best of their ability
- Present written homework neatly

Parents/Guardians should:

- Encourage a positive attitude towards homework in all subjects from an early age.
- Encourage children to work independently as far as possible. Resist over-helping.
- Encourage children to organise themselves for homework. Have all books and materials to hand.
- Agree a suitable time for doing homework, being aware of age, the need for playtime, relaxation and family time.
- Providing a quiet place, suitable work surface, free from distractions, interruptions and screens.
- Encourage good presentation and neatness within a reasonable time.
- Sign the homework diary (daily) checking that all homework is complete.
- Check that the child has all necessary books, homework journal, copies, pencils, mathematical equipment, dictionary and any other items needed for the next school day.
- Communicate difficulties to the teacher using the homework journal.

Where appropriate parents/guardians will be assisted in understanding the homework policy and being mindful of any obstacle that language etc. might present in contributing to a positive homework environment.

Teachers Should:

- Set homework, review assignments and provide feedback to students.
- Monitor homework on a regular basis to help identify pupils with special difficulties

What happens when homework is not completed:

Homework should be completed each night. However, the school understands that at certain times children may have an unusual activity after school that leaves little time for homework to be completed. For example, due to family commitments or involvement in a special occasion. In situations like this, parents should write a note in the homework diary and their child will be excused from homework. (This should not happen on a regular basis. It should not reoccur on the same day each week.) Children may work ahead on their regular homework (e.g. maths and spellings) to allow time for after school clubs at the discretion of their parents. Parents should take responsibility for this as the primary educator of their child outside of school. When homework is not done regularly the teacher will contact the parent/guardian, initially via the pupil's homework journal to try to resolve the situation. If the situation continues, then the matter is brought to the attention of the Principal who will contact the parent/guardian and arrange a meeting to discuss how the matter can be resolved.

Please note that if homework is incomplete and there is no explanation given by parents – no note in diary or email, pupils will be asked to complete their homework, in school during a break or during 'Golden Time'.

Children on holidays or outside the country when school is open.

We ask parents to respect the integrity of the school calendar by not planning holidays when the school is open. No schoolwork will be given to children going abroad for holidays during term time.

Children should not use the internet for any homework without parental supervision. Please refer to our Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

Ratification and Communication:

This policy will be in operation in October of the school year 2025/2026, having been ratified by Staff (27th September 2025) and BOM (16th October 2025). All staff will be emailed a copy of this policy and it will be available on the school website, school shared drive and on request from the school office.

Signed: 

Date: 16/10/2025

Chairperson of the board

Signed: 

Date: 16/10/2025

Principal