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| ***Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Ró-Naofa*** |

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**Homework Policy**

**Introduction**

Home and school are two different but closely related aspects of children's lives. Frequently, these blur into one another as in the case of homework which is the most regular link between home and school. Homework is, therefore, an ideal opportunity to foster an educational partnership between home and school.

This policy, devised by teachers in consultation with parents/guardians and approved by the Board of Management is intended to maximise the benefit to children of time spent on homework.

**Rationale for Homework**

Homework is given to:

* Reinforce what the child learns during the day and encourage habits of independent learning
* Provide a link between school and home
* Develop a child’s concentration skills and develop a work ethic
* Sometimes in senior classes, homework is designed to provide opportunities for creativity and independent learning, and to develop time management skills e.g. individual/group projects

**Homework**

Homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and speaking and listening tasks. Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their ability. The child will benefit if homework is completed with parents in a positive, nurturing environment.

We have a ***no written homework policy*** in Rath N.S. There are a number of reasons as to why we have decided this including;

* Written homework can cause a lot of stress and tension at home.
* Parents/guardians live extremely busy lifestyles nowadays. Quality family time spent with your children will be more beneficial. See list of suggestions in Appendix 1.
* Time should be made available for after school activities.
* There is very little conclusive evidence to suggest that large amounts of written homework benefit pupils.

The only exception to this rule, is that senior classes, in preparation for secondary school, will occasionally be asked to prepare and present projects on various topics. This may involve some written work at home.

Additionally;

* We ask parents/guardians to sign homework each night.
* Teachers will send an email to parents/guardians every two weeks outlining some topics that will be covered in the classroom. This should allow for discussion and conversation at home, therefore enhancing the learning experience and allowing parents/guardians to be active participants in their child’s learning.
* Occasionally, we will trial new homework initiatives. Parents/guardians will be informed in advance.

**Time Limits**

We have specific limits to the amount of time spent on homework in each class. Homework should not exceed these time limits on any evening. If it does, we ask you to write one line stating that you reached the time limit and we ask you to sign. The class teachers will understand. If it is happening regularly, we ask you to speak with the class teacher and accommodations/alterations will be made.

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| **Class** | **Time Limit**  |
| Junior Infants/Senior Infants | 15 minutes  |
| 1st Class/2nd Class | 20 minutes  |
| 3rd Class/4th Class  | 25 minutes  |
| 5th Class/6th Class | 30 minutes  |

Please note that just because, for example, the 5th Class limit is 30 minutes, the class teacher doesn’t necessarily pitch the homework to take 30 minutes. It might take less than that most evenings.

**Pupils with Learning Difficulties**

Parents/Guardians of children with learning difficulties should keep in close contact with the class teacher and the special education teacher regarding difficulties. Appropriate homework may be given to children with learning difficulties.

**Ratification and communication**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on December 12th 2019. This followed consultation with parents and staff.

Cathaoirleach: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Dáta: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix 1**

**Suggested Activities for the Home**

The teachers have compiled a list of possible activities:

**Junior Infants – 2nd Class**

* Watch cartoons on TG4
* Listen to, discuss and retell a variety of stories
* Visit the library
* Help your child to become more independent by giving them tasks to complete in your home or garden
* Promote the use of role play in your home for example set up a doctor’s surgery /estate agents/supermarket
* Encourage your child to paint/draw/colour to improve their fine motor skills
* Give your child plenty of experience with jigsaws and card games
* Provide your child with a creative box to make constructions. Include scissors, sellotape, paper, containers and old magazines
* Go on a mini-beast hunt
* Write a sentence in their diary
* Play ‘I spy’ and ‘snakes and ladders’
* Play ‘shop’ using real money
* Use a ruler to measure things around the house
* Practice tying your shoe laces
* Read a story with your baby brother/sister/family
* Tell your family 3 things you did at school today
* Practice reading books with expression
* Put new words/tricky words from stories into oral sentences to show their meaning
* Go for a cycle or play outside
* Practice handwriting
* Write a few sentences in your free writing copy
* Play hangman/eye spy to improve spelling
* Measure things around the house for example weight, capacity, length

**3rd Class – 6th Class**

* Set up an obstacle course. Time completion of it
* Read outside
* Help with food shopping. Discuss prices and name fruits and vegetables
* Calculate kilometres on journeys. Read signposts
* Play card games and board games
* Mindfulness; 5 minutes silence
* Help gardening
* Build a den. Identify common flowers and trees
* Nature art; create characters using leaves and twigs
* Baking; weigh, temperature of oven, timing
* World map; chat about countries
* Talk about their day with their families over a family meal
* Do household chores
* Read a book
* Identify birds they see in their garden
* Identify trees/native plants
* Go for a cycle
* Go for a walk
* Watch TG4
* Keep a diary/use a free writing copy/make comic strips
* Play countdown using numbers and letters
* Help out at home by completing household chores
* Spend time with your family and siblings-talk to each other and help each other!
* Read to and play games with your younger siblings
* Bake or cook
* Estimate- time, distance, measures, money, shopping etc.
* Practice the art of conversation!
* Visit family, friends, neighbours, especially if you feel they may be lonely or would like a chat
* Practice mindfulness in the simplest of ways- go for a walk, enjoy nature, listen to music
* Do arts and crafts from drawing to painting to creative comics to sewing to knitting
* Help out a home-do jobs-be independent-develop your coping and life skills
* Talk openly about secondary school and your feelings about going to secondary
* Get organised-practice organisation skills daily. For example, get your uniform ready, make your lunch, organize sports gear etc.
* Get regular exercise-swim, walk, run, play sports

But **most importantly,** reduce screen time and have loads of fun.