**Homework Policy St.Mary’s N. S.**

1**. Why give homework?**

* To reinforce 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.
* Homework is meant to be achievable by a child, i.e. it provides an opportunity to practise work already done. It is normally prepared by the teacher in class. However, sometimes with senior classes, some homework is designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity. 
* Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their individual ability — no more, no less.

2. **How often is homework given?**

 Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, but not on

Fridays. There are two exceptions:

1. If homework has been neglected during the week.
2. In senior classes some project work may be undertaken at weekends.

* Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the Principal, children are given "homework off" as a treat or as an acknowledgement of some special occasion.
* Please note extra homework may sometimes be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not done homework, made a suitable effort or presented untidy work. However, the teachers will endeavour at all times to ensure that homework is not seen as a punishment and if the latter occurs it is an exercise given in the child's best interest.

3. **What is content of homework**?

* Ideally homework will contain 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 an 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.
* 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.

1. **How much (time) 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:

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| Junior Infants | 0 — 10 minutes. |
| Senior Infants | Up to 20 minutes. |
| Rang 1  Rang 2  Rang 3 | Up to 30 minutes.  Up to 40 minutes  Up to 50 minutes |
| Rang 4 | Up to 1 hour |
| Rang 5 | Up to 1 hour 15 minutes |
| Rang 6 | Up to 1 hour 30 minutes |

Homework is given from Monday to Thursday. Normally there is no homework at weekends or on a school day just before a public holiday. However, children in middle and senior classes may sometimes be required to work independently on projects at weekends. Reading of library books should be encouraged at the weekend.

1. **How much help should parents give?**

Parents should try to help their children with homework by:

* + providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework.
  + in so far as is possible preventing interruptions or distractions, like TN. or other children.
  + bearing in mind that children should do written homework themselves and that parents should only help when the child has difficulty.
  + when a child has difficulty with homework, helping 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.  remembering that library reading is not homework in the regular sense and it is simply meant to be an enjoyable exercise between parent and child. If it's not enjoyable, the reading should not be done.

1. **How often should parents monitor homework?**
   * Parents should check their child's homework every evening.
   * The pupil's homework notebook is an important record of the child's homework. If the parent wishes to support their child and his/her teacher, an invaluable means of doing so is signing their homework notebook each evening.
   * Ideally, all written messages to each child's teacher should be put in the homework notebook.
   * Letters to parents are given to the eldest or the only child in the family in the school. Parents are asked to rot check their child's schoolbag for such notes on a regular basis as part of the 'homework' process.
2. **How often do teachers monitor homework**?

* Ideally teachers like to check homework on a daily basis. However in a multi-class situation 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 may be checked less often e.g. every second day.
* Some items of homework (and class work) may be checked by children themselves or by other children under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for the children. The teacher remains vigilant during these correction times to ensure that sensitive situations, in which children may feel exposed or their ability being assessed by others, do not occur.

1. **When should parents communicate with teachers about homework?**
   * When their child cannot do homework due to family circumstances.
   * When their 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.

A note will suffice in each case.

1. **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 the child is still in school 'mode'. However, some children need a break before starting homework. Essentially each parent may need to assess the situation for themselves to ensure that their child's circumstances are considered.

 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, parents should contact the class teacher.