

APPENDIX C

MERCY CONVENT PRIMARY SCHOOL, NAAS.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday but not on Fridays with certain exceptions:

- If homework has been neglected during the week.
- In senior classes some project work is undertaken at weekends.

Occasionally, at the discretion of the class teacher or the Principal, children are given a “homework pass” (homework off) as a treat or as acknowledgement of some special occasion.

- Parents are requested to ensure that homework is supervised and monitored to ensure that it is completed to the highest possible standard.
- Parents/guardians of children are required to sign homework notebook each night.
- Parents/guardians are requested to inform the teacher if for any reason a child cannot complete his / her homework.
- Guideline target times for homework are as follows:

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| a) Junior/Senior Infants: | Children are required to do some word recognition work/oral work |
| b) First and Second Classes: | 20 – 30 minutes |
| c) Third and Fourth Classes: | 30 – 45 minutes |
| d) Fifth and Sixth Classes: | 45 - 60 minutes |

Homework fosters independence, self-reliance, self-esteem, co-operation and responsibility and life long 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 their own to the best of their ability. 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.

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, spelling, 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.

Pupils should:

- enter homework accurately in homework diary.
- ensure they take home relevant books and copies.
- complete homework assignments to the best of their ability.
- present written work 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. The pupil should have the Homework Journal open to tick off work as it is completed.
- Agree a suitable time for doing homework, taking into account of age, the need for playtime, relaxation and family time.
- Provide a quiet place, suitable work surface, free from distractions, interruptions and T.V.
- Encourage good presentation and neatness within a reasonable time.
- Sign the homework diary checking that all homework is complete.
- Check that the child has all necessary books, homework journal, copies, pencils, mathematical equipment, dictionary, P.E. clothes, if needed for the next school day.
- Communicate difficulties to the teacher in the homework journal.

Teacher should:

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

How often do teachers monitor homework?

Ideally, teachers check homework on a daily basis. However, with large class numbers, it is not always possible to check each child's homework journal every day. As children get older and learn to work independently, some items of homework are checked less often, e.g. every second day or once a week. Some items of homework (and class work) may be checked by children themselves, under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children as it promotes responsibility and self esteem.

What happens when homework is not done?

When homework is not done regularly without written notification as to the reason from parents/guardians, the teacher contacts parents with a view to discussing the matter - understanding the problem and resolving the situation. It is only when the problem is identified that actions required to help resolve it can be taken by the pupil, parents/guardians and teacher. If the situation continues, then the matter is brought to the attention of the Principal who will contact the parent(s) and arrange a meeting to discuss how the matter can be resolved.

Ratified by the Board of Management on 12th May 2010.

Signed:

Chairperson, Board of Management.

Date: