

## **Homework Policy for Letterfrack NS**

### **Introduction**

This policy was formulated in August 2012 and is reviewed and updates every four years. It applies to the giving of homework by teachers and the responsibility of parents and children when doing homework.

### **Why give homework?**

- To re-enforce 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 practice 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

### **How often is homework given?**

- Homework for 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class is given Mondays and must be handed up Friday for correction. Infant homework will be given daily at the discretion of the class teacher.
- Each class teacher is responsible for creating a homework sheet with tasks that are to be completed each evening. This sheet is to be kept in a homework folder. Children are discouraged from doing all their written homework in the one evening but parents may swap tasks to an evening where they have more time to help their child.
- Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given "homework off" as a treat or 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.
- There is no homework on the weekend unless homework has been neglected during the week or if a child needs to catch up on class work.
- If homework is still neglected over the weekend the children may have to complete it during break time on Monday.
- There is no written homework the week before holidays.

### **What is the 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 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

- 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.

### **How much time for 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:

|                |                         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| Junior Infants | 0-10 minutes            |
| Senior Infants | Up to 20 minutes        |
| Rang 1         | Up to 30 minutes        |
| Rang 2         | Up to 40 minutes        |
| Rang 3         | 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 not homework at the weekends or on a school day just before a public holiday. Homework during the month of June usually involves some sort of physical activity such as going for a walk, swim or playing outside with friends.

### **How much help should parents give?**

- Parents should try to help their children by:
  - Providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework
  - To prevent interruptions or distractions, like T.V or other children
- Children should do written homework themselves and parents should only help when the child has difficulty
- If a child has difficulty with homework, the parents should help 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
- Shared 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, shared reading should not be done.

### **How often should parents monitor homework?**

- Parents should check a child's homework every evening

- The pupil's homework folder 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 your child's teacher should be put in the homework folder
- Please check that your child ticks each item of homework when completed
- Letters to parents are placed in the homework folder. Please check your child's journal for such notes on a regular basis

#### **How often do teachers monitor homework?**

- Teachers may check homework on a daily basis but will correct it on a weekly basis
- Some items of homework (and classwork) may be checked by children themselves under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children

#### **When should parents communicate with the teachers about homework?**

- When your child cannot do homework due to family circumstances
- When your child cannot do homework because he/she cannot understand some aspect
- If the time being spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time

#### **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 your child is still fresh, however some children need a break before starting homework.

#### **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, please contact the class teacher.**