



RANSBORO NATIONAL SCHOOL

HOMWORK POLICY

This policy has been reviewed and updated following a staff meeting on 7.10.2015.

A: BACKGROUND

Educational research has shown that a child's learning is significantly improved where parents are involved in the child's learning process. Homework is one of the best areas for this active involvement of parents and child. When parents become involved in children's learning, the children see learning as something important and worthwhile and are much more likely to make progress. A strong bond is also created between parent and child through collaboration with homework.

B: Aims

The purpose of having children complete homework is:

- To make parents aware of work being covered in school
- To create a sense of self-discipline in the child
- To revise and reinforce work covered in school
- To foster interest in research skills for project work etc.
- To develop a child's concentration skills and develop a work ethic

C: Content of Homework

Homework content can vary from day to day. It may contain some of the following:

- English reading
- Irish Reading
- Maths exercises
- Learning of maths tables
- Written Work (English, Geography, History, SPHE etc.)
- Handwriting exercises
- Learning of spellings and spelling exercises
- Pieces to be "learned by heart"

- Drawing/colouring of worksheets
- Project work

Ideally homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks. This balance is not always possible as homework will depend on what work has been covered in school during the day. However, it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning tasks is as important as written work. 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 that this work is done well.

D: 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 the homework that matters. The following are only *guidelines* for time spent at homework:

- Junior Infants and Senior Infants: Approx 10-15 minutes
- Rang I & II: 20 minutes
- Rang III & IV: 30-40 minutes
- Rang V & VI: 45-60 minutes

Homework is normally given from Monday to Thursday nights. At weekends, children should be encouraged to read for pleasure. Children in senior classes may be asked to do some project work at weekends.

E: 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. The most important thing is that a homework routine is established in the home.

Homework should never be left until morning time before school.

F: Format of Homework

Written homework should be neatly presented and completed in the following format:

- Dated
- Titled
- Page Ruled
- Skip and draw line across page at the end of an exercise
- Parents should sign homework notebook/copy every evening

G: How much help should parents give?

Parental help with homework should be available on a daily basis and should be given with enthusiasm and obvious pleasure. It should not be treated as a chore or a nuisance. Children are very sharp at noticing attitudes and parental indifference can kill the child's interest and eventually no help will be sought.

A homework routine should be established by parents in the home. Parents can initially help their children with homework by:

- a) Providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework
- b) Preventing interruptions or distractions like TV or other children

There is no need for parents to be fully familiar with all aspects of the curriculum. Supervision of homework as to content and neatness and time spent at various items would be very helpful. Parents could also ensure that all homework given is attempted.

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that homework has been completed, however the children themselves should complete the assignments and should only seek help when in difficulty. If a child is having extreme difficulty completing homework in a reasonable time it should be discontinued and the parent should make contact with the class teacher.

H: How often do teachers monitor homework?

Ideally, teachers like to check homework on a daily basis. However, for a variety of reasons this may not always be possible. As children get older and learn to work independently, some items of homework are checked less often e.g. every second day or once per week. 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.

I: Parent – Teacher Communication

Parents should make contact with the class teacher:

- a) When your child cannot complete homework due to family circumstances
- b) When your child cannot complete homework because she/he cannot understand some aspect
- c) If the time being spent at homework is often longer than the recommended time allocations

Initially the best way to make contact with the teacher is through a brief note in the homework copy/notebook. The class teacher may also write a note to the parents in this copy/notebook.

J: Children with Special Needs

The class teacher will consult and collaborate with the Learning Support Teacher or the Resource Teacher in the allocation of homework assignments to children with learning difficulties or special needs. Every effort will be made to ensure that work assigned for such children will be appropriate to their abilities.

**If homework is a stressful experience between parent and child, something is wrong! This leads to poor learning and defeats the whole purpose of homework.
Should this happen on a regular basis, please contact the class teacher.**