



# Shanballymore National School,

*Shanballymore, Mallow, Co. Cork.*

*Roll Number: 03704E*

Phone/Fax: 022 25611

E-mail: shanballymorens@gmail.com

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## Shanballymore N.S Homework Policy

### Introductory Statement

This homework policy was revised on January 6th, 2016. A series of meetings were held involving the teachers, parents and Board of Management. Together we discussed the value of homework, the role of parents in homework, teachers' concerns regarding homework and possible solutions to these concerns.

### Rationale

\* Teachers had expressed concerns about homework. They felt that with the introduction of the revised curriculum new approaches and methodologies were not being reflected in homework assignments given to pupils.

\* Teachers also expressed concern about the completion of homework exercises.

\* Parental feedback at Parent Teacher Meetings had shown that there were some problems with the time being spent on homework by pupils.

Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school

Shanballymore N.S. seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential. Homework encourages pupils to work independently and take responsibility for their assignments.

### Aims

- 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.

### How often is homework given?

Homework is assigned each day from Monday to Thursday. There are exceptions to this.

- Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given "homework off" as a treat or as acknowledgment of special occasions e.g. bank holidays, communion, confirmation.
- 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.

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) homework?**

The following are guidelines for time spent at homework. Children have varying abilities and will therefore 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. It is essential that homework is checked by a parent / guardian or supervising adult each night and that the homework diary is then signed by the adult. Homework is a shared learning experience between child, parent and teacher. The following are general guidelines only:

Junior Infants	
Senior Infants	{Up to 20 minutes}
Rang 1	
Rang 2	{Up to 30 minutes}
Rang 3	
Rang 4	{Up to 45 minutes}
Rang 5	
Rang 6	{Up to 1 hour}

### **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
  - ◆ 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.

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

- Parents should check and sign a child's homework journal every evening.
- The pupil's journal is an important record of the child's homework. It is also a valuable means of communication between parents and teachers.
- Please check that your child records its homework neatly in the correct page and ticks each item of homework when completed.

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

- Ideally teachers like to 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. Spot checks are carried out regularly.
- 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 supervision 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 she/he cannot understand some aspect.
- If the time 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.  
Homework should not be left until morning time before school.

#### **Special Needs and Special Cases**

Provision is made, at the teacher's discretion (and where appropriate, in consultation with parents, Learning Support Teacher, Resource Teacher, Principal etc.), for the modification of homework in the case of pupils with special needs.

Family circumstances may also be taken into consideration with regard to homework.

#### **Sanctions for non-completion of homework**

Pupils who do not complete homework or present careless homework will complete it at the wall in the playground during break-times with supervising teacher.

Where there is a persistent problem the child is put on a homework critical list. Parents will be asked to come to the school each morning, for an agreed period of time, to present homework with the child. This is to help both teachers and parents to tackle a very time-consuming problem. When there is a marked and sustained improvement the child is taken off the critical list.

#### **Review Procedure**

The policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of experience. It will be reviewed by the full staff and Board of Management every five years. Any staff member, board member, parent, guardian or student who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible. Next review of this policy will occur before or during the school year 2021.

#### **Policy Ratification**

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Shanballymore National School at its meeting held on:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson, Board of Management