

Horseleap N.S. Homework Policy

Introduction

This policy was drawn up by the teachers of Horseleap N.S. in January 2019. The emphasis is on providing a link between home and school and reinforcing what the child has learned during the day at school. Homework aims to develop a child's concentration skills and develop a work ethic. Homework should be easily achievable for each child. Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their individual ability.

How often is homework given?

- Homework is given on Mondays – Thursdays.
- Homework may be given at the weekend if:
 - it has been neglected during the week.
 - In senior classes some project work is undertaken at weekends
- Please note extra homework may be sometime be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not done homework, made a suitable effort or presented untidy work.
- Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given "Homework off" as a treat or as acknowledgment of some special occasion.

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, finishing work started in class and research for projects in the Senior Room.
- Children often feel that reading and "learning by heart" is not real homework. At Horseleap N.S. we regard reading as the most important homework! Parents can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned, ensuring this work is done well. Children in the Senior Room can listen to their Irish reading on CD in order to ensure correct pronunciation.

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 30 minutes
Rang 3	Up to 40 minutes
Rang 4	Up to 50 minutes
Rang 5	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
- 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 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.
- Ideally, all written messages to your child's teacher should be put in the homework journal (additional pages available at the end of the journal).
- Please check that your child records his/her 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, especially reading and spellings through dictation.
- 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.

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 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
- 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, please contact the class teacher.