



# Dean Kelly N.S. Homework Policy

## **Introduction:**

Work has been ongoing to review of our school's Homework Policy since the start of September 2023. Consultation has taken place with teachers, parents and students to determine the best way forward in this regard. Parents were surveyed when they attended the parent/teacher meeting in November 2023. Focus groups were held with groups of pupils and the input of the student council was also sought. The findings of the consultation process were:-

- Homework was a source of stress / tension for 60% of families.
- 80% of families requested more hands-on and active type of homework.
- 90% of families have access to a laptop or mobile phone.
- 55% of pupils are reading for pleasure at home.

From the consultation it was clear that there was scope to improve upon our current homework policy for greater variety and creativity to be introduced when it comes to homework. It was also recommended that active homework should form a part of weekly homework. Active homework includes singing, playing sports, board games (including chess, snakes and ladders) card games, quizzes, oral language presentations, debating, research for projects and physical activity. Active homework will be given on a Thursday. Please note that spellings and tables must also be done on a Thursday and active homework is not to be seen as a night off homework.

Active homework will be a mix of outdoor and indoor activities, depending on the time of the year. We have sought the input from our pupils and from the student council on this.

Homework will be given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays for every week with the exception of the following six weeks:-

- The first week back in September
- The week of the Christmas holidays
- The week of the Easter holidays
- There will be no homework from the June bank holiday onwards.

From the consultation carried out it is clear that there is general support for some kind of homework to be given, and that, when it is presented in a stimulating and motivating way to students, that the (potential) benefits are seen by all groups. There is also a majority of people in each group who feel that there is scope for greater variety and creativity to be introduced when it comes to homework. It is this approach which will form the key change to the Homework Policy.

## **Definition and features of homework in this updated policy:**

- Homework refers to any work or activities assigned to students as an extension of classroom work.

- Homework can take many forms and includes reading, oral and written activities. Each type of activity has equal importance and therefore oral work is just as important as written work.
- Homework is an opportunity for teachers to be creative greater when assigning work, and to include greater elements of pupil choice, physical activity, project work and essential life skills as key parts of homework. There should be a mix of different activities given, and not an over-reliance on textbooks or written homework.
- Teachers will still give spellings, tables and reading in the homework that is assigned during the week, however it is not intended that these activities will encompass all of the homework given, and ideally there will be a range of written, oral and physical activities given to the class.
- Teachers will also have the discretion to ask their class to consider some questions/problems as their homework and for them to do some research on these at home (possibly even discuss them with the adults or siblings at home) and then discuss these with their teacher and class the following day.
- Active homework will be given once a week on a Thursday.
- Learning songs and poems will form part of homework from time to time.

### **Role of the Teacher**

Teachers are responsible for:

- Providing students with time to note the homework activities in their homework journal
- Explaining how the homework might be carried out
- Co-ordinating with the special education teacher (SET) with regard to homework for those receiving support
- Correcting homework (through observation of work done or more in-depth written correction) or monitoring children's checking of homework (peer or self-correction).
- Providing feedback to children and parents if necessary

### **Role of the Pupil**

Pupils are expected to:

- Complete all assignments neatly and honestly
- Work independently and ask for help only when needed or when asked to consult with someone at home
- Read independently (or with a family member) on a daily basis
- Practise tables on a daily basis

### **Role of the Parent**

Parents are encouraged to:

- Plan a homework schedule and a place free from interruptions for the child
- Assist the child if necessary but not by doing the homework for the child
- Engage with their child's homework activities whenever possible, especially when there is scope for discussion with family members at home.
- Communicate with the teacher if the child encounters difficulty, has spent an undue amount of time at homework or cannot complete homework due to special circumstances.

### **Frequency and Duration of Homework**

Our homework policy gives individual teachers the flexibility to decide on the amount of homework that they consider appropriate for their class. However, the following guidelines apply:

|                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> class | Up to 20 minutes |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> class | Up to 25 minutes |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> class | Up to 30 minutes |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> class | Up to 35 minutes |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> class | Up to 40 minutes |

### **Conclusion**

If done correctly, and with sufficient thought as to the ability of the children in the class and what motivates them, homework has the potential to

- consolidate the learning that happens in school, and to encourage children to take a greater responsibility for their learning
- develop the confidence and self-discipline needed to study on their own, and it can help to prepare them for secondary school.
- help parents keep in touch with what is happening in school for their children, and also how their children are getting on with their learning.

### **Review date**

This policy is due for review in June 2027.

### **Ratification & Communication**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson)