

Homework Guidelines

Homework is part of a continuous learning process and in St. Cuana's N.S. we regard homework as important for the following reasons:

- It allows pupils the opportunity to revisit, revise and consolidate skills learned in class.
- It provides a link between the teacher and parents.
- It gives pupils an opportunity for independent learning and study.
- It helps 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 children to work independently and with initiative.
- Children are expected to do homework to the best of their individual ability – no more, no less.

How much time should be spent on homework?

The time required for homework varies by class as follows:

Junior/Senior Infants - Up to 15 minutes

1st/2nd Class - Up to 30 minutes

3rd/4th Class - Up to 40 minutes

5th/6th Class - Up to 60 minutes

The above times 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.

Homework is given from Monday to Thursday. Normally there is no homework at the weekends. However, children in middle and senior classes may sometimes be required to work independently on projects at weekends. Occasionally pupils may be given a night off (or a homework pass) as a reward for a special effort made by the class or by an individual.

How can parents help/support their child during homework?

1. Set up a homework-friendly area.
 - Well lit place to complete homework where your child will be able to study and concentrate.
 - Quiet space with no distractions for e.g. TV/loud music etc.
 - Ensure your child has all the necessary books/items to complete homework for e.g. pencil/eraser/ruler/colours etc.
2. Schedule a regular homework time (as soon as possible after coming home from school – after a snack)
3. Encourage your child to stay focused on his/her homework. Some parents may find it useful to use a timer to keep their child on task.
4. Encourage your child to do his/her work independently and check it over after.
5. Be nearby in case your child has questions but don't take over the work.
6. Being consistent. Discuss, monitor check and sign homework journals every night. Your child will make mistakes at times. Encourage them to find and correct their own mistakes. Children must be able to accept that making mistakes is part of the learning process and it is important that they can go back and try a different method or approach.
7. If you notice a problem with your child's homework, whether they have difficulty with a particular aspect of it, they can't complete it in the time set or any other problem you should alert your child's teacher as soon as possible. Write a note in their diary, if they have one or make an appointment to speak to the teacher.
8. If you are satisfied that your child has worked diligently for the recommended time and still has not completed the homework you should stop your child and write a note to the teacher explaining this. This will help the teacher to gauge how much homework to give.
9. Teachers may differentiate homework to suit individual children's abilities.
10. Encourage your child to read for pleasure every day and parents are encouraged to read to younger children every day.
11. Praise and encourage your child during homework.
12. Individual teachers will inform parents of any specific homework requirements for their own class.
13. Please check your child's homework folders/diaries regularly for letters and school correspondence.