

# Homework Policy

## Homework Policy

### Introduction

A full review of the Homework Policy has been undertaken in the Kilkenny School Project. This review was informed by focused discussions with children, Staff Meetings, Homework Policy Committee and a Parent/Guardian survey. (Appendix 1)

In addition, policies from schools within the Educate Together Sector were studied along with some of the recent research on the topic of homework, drawing as far as possible from an Irish context.

[Guidelines on homework](#) from the National Parent's Council were adapted to suit the KSP.

The National Council and Curriculum (NCCA) [resources](#), developed to help parents/guardians to support the child's learning were examined in the context of this review.

The PDST School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process was employed in the formulation of this policy.

### Relationship to the Ethos of Kilkenny School Project

At the core of KSP, is a child-centred philosophy that seeks to enable each child to develop his or her potential through ways and means which support their individual needs.

This review has been undertaken and guided by the ethos of Educate Together schools and is informed by Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; "In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions ... the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration".

Parents/guardians and staff of KSP should strive to build a respectful, collaborative learning community, where children benefit from the cross-section of skills and knowledge represented amongst both parents/guardians and staff.

### Aims

- Homework aims to be purposeful and achievable for each child.
- Homework aims to reinforce the learning that has taken place at school.
- Homework provides an opportunity to develop an active partnership with the parent/guardian and the child's teacher in supporting children to achieve their potential. This relationship between parent and teacher is based on mutual respect, trust and goodwill. Good communication is crucial to this relationship. (<https://ethos.educatetogether.ie/>).
- Homework can develop skills and self-discipline that will be of benefit to children in order to enhance learning and encourage them to be independent learners.
- Teachers use homework assignments to provide feedback and to respond to diverse needs by differentiating assignments to best support the child's learning journey, when possible. Homework can provide an opportunity for children to use non-school resources (family members, library, environment, media and internet).
- Parent/guardian will actively engage with the homework process and offer support and guidance to the child.

Homework
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**Assigning homework:**

How often is homework given?

Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

On occasion at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given a “Homework Pass” as a reward for reaching an individual or a class target, or as an acknowledgment of a special occasion.

**Homework Time Guidelines:**

Teachers will endeavour to give homework that should fit comfortably into the allocated time-periods.

Junior/Senior infants: 10-15 minutes First/Second class: 20-30 minutes Third/Fourth class: 30-40 minutes Fifth/Sixth class: 40-50 minutes
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- 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.
- Children are expected to take down their homework carefully in a legible manner in the KSP Homework Diary, which is purchased annually through the school.
- Homework can be assigned on a weekly basis or on a day-by-day approach or in a blended approach.
- The homework diary is an important tool for communication between parents/guardians and teachers. It could be used if the child is experiencing difficulty or has undertaken alternative/extended activities or when he/she is unable to complete homework.

If homework is a stressful experience, this can lead to poor learning and defeats the whole purpose. When this happens on a regular basis, parents/guardians should contact the class teacher.

**Guiding Principles for Homework in the KSP?**

Ideally, homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, oral language, learning tasks and written tasks. This balance is not always possible and can vary considerably from day to day.

In line with the Primary Language Curriculum, playful and interactive oral language activities will be regularly incorporated into children’s homework. However, it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading, oral language and learning is as important as written work.

Parents/Guardians can play an important role in listening to reading, engaging in oral language activities and items to be learned ensuring this work is done well.

Teachers will include different types of homework. Homework may include activities such as Wellbeing, Outdoor activities, Active homework, Board-games, Project work, Art Activities, Cooking, Gardening, Personal interest activities, Nature Walks, Gratitude Weeks, etc.

Whole school approaches will take place at specific times in the school calendar, for example there is an emphasis on Active Homework during Active Week. This may include: family runs, hikes, sports, nature walks, home adventures etc.

## **Diffentiation of Homework**

### **Range of Ability**

Parents/guardians should feel empowered to support their child in extending all the child's learning opportunities. The parent/guardian is often best placed to know what support their child may need and how to extend learning opportunities for their own child's learning. Regular communication and collaboration between child, parents/guardians and teacher/s will assist/enhance the child's learning outcomes.

When children experience special educational needs (SEN), families may encounter additional stress with homework and may require additional supports and communication from the Class Teacher and Special Education Teacher (SET). Teachers will endeavour to facilitate a child-centred approach to meeting the child's needs in partnership with Parents/Guardians and other relevant professionals.

Depending on age and ability, some types of homework are well suited to challenging the more able child, for example project work.

Teachers will endeavour to include an element of choice when assigning homework whenever it is feasible and practical to do so.

### **Language of the Home**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to use the language(s) of the home to talk to their child about homework and the learning at school. Discussions in the home language(s) will help the child to understand the ideas more thoroughly and Parents/Guardians will connect confidently with the curriculum and learning activities.

### **Challenges**

In general, deadlines for project work will span a weekend to enable busy parents/guardians to assist the children with their research and/or to enable children to visit relevant places for information.

All parents/guardians have an important role to play in ensuring that their child has the resources needed to complete homework. When obstacles exist such as poverty or marginalisation, parents/guardians need to communicate with the school and every effort will be made to ensure that the child and family are supported in so far as possible.

## **Assessing Homework**

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

Ideally, teachers like to check homework on a daily basis. However, it is not always possible to check each child's homework every day.

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.

### **Guidelines for Parent/Guardian**

Set aside a time each day for homework, taking into account other needs, such as recreation and family circumstances.

As a parent/guardian, you have a really important role to play in:

- Encouraging your child's work
- Observing their work
- Ensuring that your child has a quiet environment to work in. The television or other distractions should not be taking place during the time allocated to homework
- Making sure your child has all the necessary equipment e.g. pens, pencils, eraser, sharpener etc.
- Being nearby in case of questions but it is important parents don't take over.
- Acknowledging and respecting effort, honesty and enthusiasm. By doing this, your child will progress and develop at their own pace, in a safe and relaxed environment
- Being consistent. Discuss, monitor, check and sign homework every night.

Success Criteria
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Practical indicators of the success of the policy will come from:

- Feedback from pupils, teachers and parents/guardians.
- Satisfactory homework exercises and assignments submitted by pupils.

Implementation Date
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September 2022

Timetable for Review
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September 2023

Ratification & Communication
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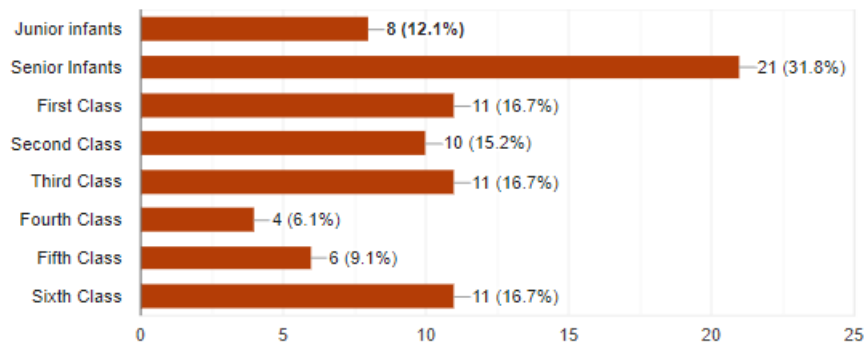
Date: the BoM officially ratifies the policy.

Date of Circulation and communication of the policy to members of the school community.

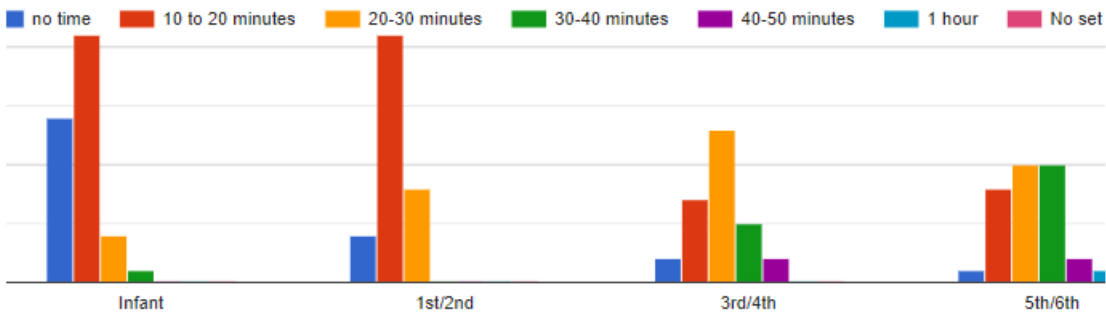
Survey results from Parents/Guardians  
Appendix 1

What class is your child/ren in? Tick all relevant boxes

66 responses

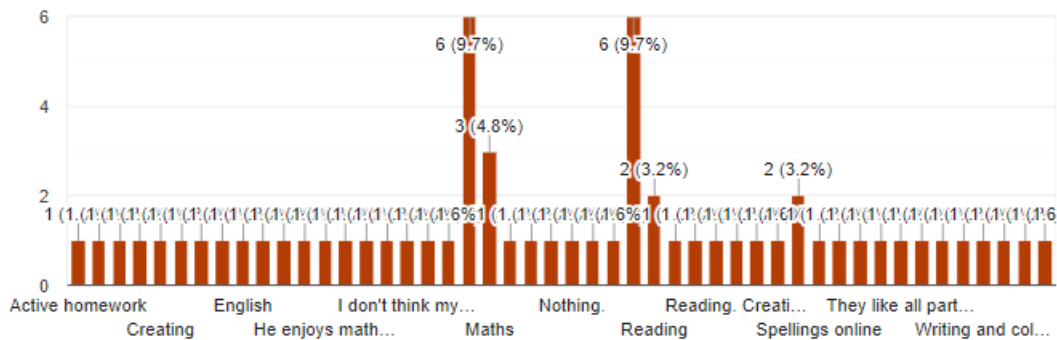


What time limit do you think is reasonable for your child/ren to spend on homework?

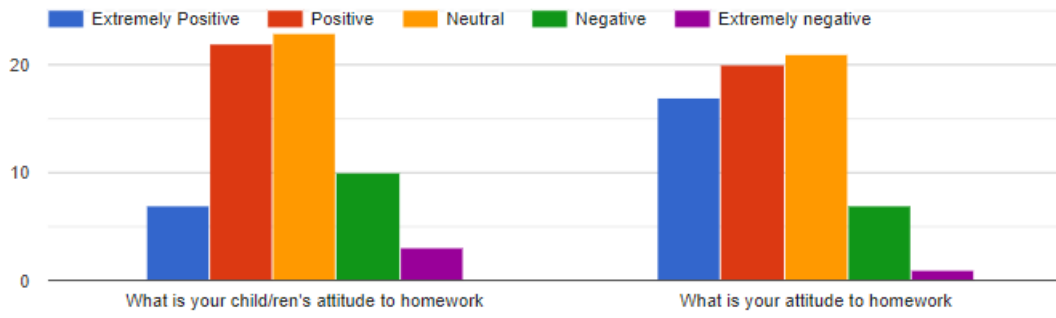


What aspect of homework does your child enjoy most?

62 responses

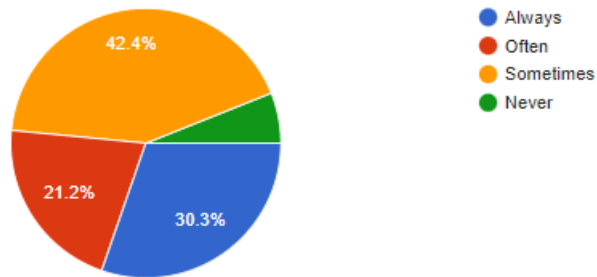


## Attitude to Homework



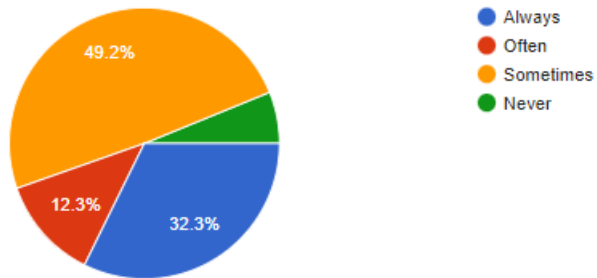
## Do you think homework is beneficial for your child?

66 responses



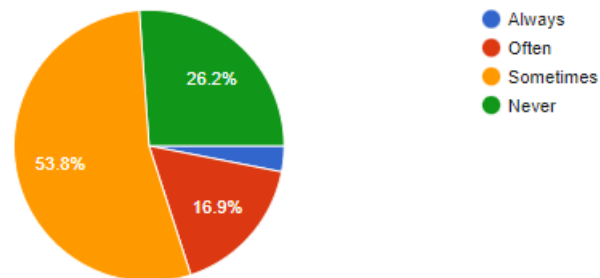
## How often does your child/ren need help with homework?

65 responses



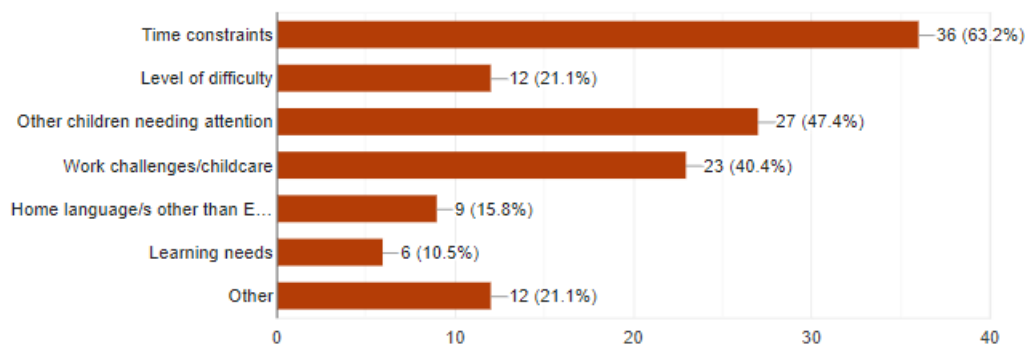
## Does homework cause stress in your home?

65 responses



Why can homework cause stress in homes, in your opinion? Tick all the relevant boxes.

57 responses



## References

- (Joan Kiely, Leah O'Toole, Maja Haals Brosnan, Emma Zara O'Brien, Cliona O'Keeffe & Claire Marie Dunne, 2021) Parental involvement, engagement and partnership in their children's learning during the primary school years April 2021 Part 2 (A) Case Studies & 2 (B) Oral Language Workshops  
[https://www.mie.ie/en/research/research\\_projects/parental\\_involvement\\_engagement\\_and\\_partnership\\_in\\_their\\_childrens\\_learning\\_during\\_the\\_primary\\_school\\_years/july-2021-final-version-of-report-inc-exec-summary.pdf](https://www.mie.ie/en/research/research_projects/parental_involvement_engagement_and_partnership_in_their_childrens_learning_during_the_primary_school_years/july-2021-final-version-of-report-inc-exec-summary.pdf)  
<https://www.npc.ie/images/uploads/downloads/Homework.PDF>  
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<https://ethos.educatetogether.ie/>  
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