

# Convoy Joint National School

## Homework Policy

### Why give homework?

- 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 ability - no more, no less.

### How often is homework given?

- Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays. There are two exceptions:
  - \* if homework has been neglected during the week
  - \* in Senior and Middle classes some project work is undertaken at weekends
- Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given 'homework off' as a treat, reward, or as an acknowledgement of some special occasion.
- Please note that pupils who have failed to do their homework or presented poorly completed homework will have to complete it at breaktime/lunchtime.
- At the discretion of the class teacher, pupils may receive a homework pass as a reward for work effort and positive behaviour.

### 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 aloud and "learning by heart" is not real homework. Parents can play an important role in listening to reading aloud and items to be learned ensuring this work is done well.

### How much (time) 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 & Senior Infants	Up to 20 minutes
<i>(Junior Infants - Homework is set after Halloween)</i>	
* 1 <sup>st</sup> Class	Up to 30 minutes
* 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	Up to 30 minutes
* 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	Up to 40 minutes
* 4 <sup>th</sup> Class	Up to 50 minutes
* 5 <sup>th</sup> Class	Up to 1 hour
* 6 <sup>th</sup> Class	Up to 1 hour

Pupils who receive learning support / resource teaching may receive additional or alternative homework. Every effort will be made to ensure that the total homework given does not exceed the recommended time guidelines.

### **How much help should parents give?**

- Parents should try to help their children with homework by:
  - establishing a daily routine that suits your family situation and setting a regular time to do homework each day - homework should never be left until morning time before school
  - providing them with a table and chair in a quiet place to work
  - preventing interruptions or distractions, like T.V. or other children
  - sitting with your child while they do their homework
  - by expecting your child to present their work neatly
- 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 them. In this case the parent should write a note to the teacher in the child's homework diary explaining the problem.

### **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.*

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

- Parents must sign their child's homework diary every evening after homework is completed and checked. This applies to pupils in **all** classes (Junior Infants - 6<sup>th</sup> Class).
- The pupil's diary 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 diary.
- Please check that your child ticks each item of homework when completed.
- School information and other letters to parents are photocopied on yellow paper and placed in the homework diary. Please check your child's diary for such notes on a regular basis.

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

- Ideally teachers like to check homework on a daily basis.
- Pupils bring their homework up to their class teacher as soon as they arrive into school.
- Some items of homework 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 part of it.
- If the time being spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time.

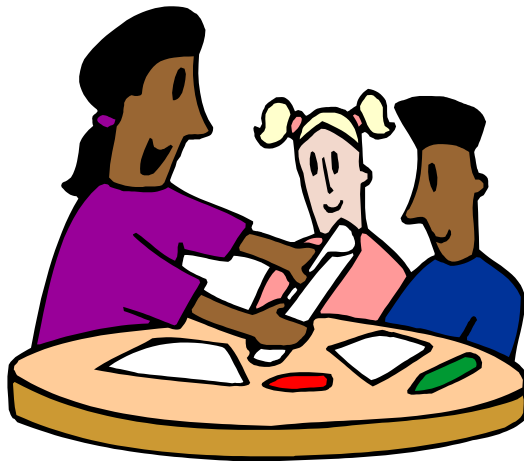
### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed in two-three years or sooner should the need arise.

Reviewed 2013

# Convoy Joint N.S.

## Homework Policy



## Helpful Hints for Parents

- Pupils need to complete homework in an environment free from distractions. Make the atmosphere relaxed and happy.
- Try to establish a routine. Homework should have a particular time-slot in the child's day. It is best tackled after school.
- Encourage and support your child. Praise him/her when they have made a realistic effort.
- Talk to your child about their homework. Read their stories. Read and share stories with your child. Homework is an important link with the work your child is doing in school.
- If your child has difficulty spelling a word, help them to sound the word and use their dictionary to find spellings.
- Do not complete written homework for your child.
- Check homework daily. Check the homework diary where the homework is recorded. Has all homework been completed? Ensure your child has ticked off each item of homework when they complete it.
- All written work should be re-read by the pupil to check for errors. Written work should be completed to a high standard....neatly presented....with margin....date....heading....clear legible handwriting.
- Sign the homework diary only when you are satisfied that homework has been fully completed.
- Check that your child has all their books in their bag....spelling books....reading books....homework copies.
- Above all, if your child is having difficulty with some aspect of homework, inform the teacher. Write a note in the homework diary or make an appointment with your child's class teacher to discuss the problem.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help and advice.

## Oral Homework

### READING

Always listen to your child reading aloud. This is important for pupils in all classes.

Read other books with your child and help them build a love of books and reading.

### SPELLINGS

Use the following method for helping your child to learn spellings:

LOOK / SAY / COVER / WRITE / CHECK

**LOOK** for sound / spelling patterns in the word

e.g. **at bat cat**

e.g. **sing bring string**

**SAY** the word and individual letters aloud three times

**COVER** the word and try to spell it aloud three times

**WRITE** the word three times

**CHECK** did you spell the word correctly?

It is very important to ask your child to write their spellings down after they've been learnt.

### TABLES

\* Tables are a very important part of the maths programme and should be learnt by rote / "learned by heart",

e.g. by saying aloud all the table  $0 \times 6 = 0$  /  $1 \times 6 = 6$  /  $2 \times 6 = 12$  etc.

\* Once your child has learned the table by rote, ask him/her the tables out of order,

e.g.  $2 \times 6 = \underline{\quad}$        $9 \times 6 = \underline{\quad}$        $4 \times 6 = \underline{\quad}$  etc.

\* Tables can also be learnt using skip counting

e.g. 3 times tables = 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36

Try to make tables a fun activity.

*We hope you find these homework guidelines helpful.*