

Aston Village Educate Together National School Homework Policy

This homework policy was initially discussed and formulated by the teaching staff of A.V.E.T.N.S in June 2010. It was felt a new homework policy was needed to develop a consistent approach towards homework in the school. A written draft was composed and reviewed by teaching staff at a meeting in September 2011. Adjustments were made as staff felt necessary. The second draft was addressed in September 2011.

Homework in relationship to the characteristic spirit of Aston Village E.T.N.S.

The philosophy of an Educate Together school is four pronged: it is a child centred, democratically run, multi denominational and co-educational school. A.V.E.T.N.S. seeks to enable each child to develop his or her potential within this context. Homework given will reflect this ethos, therefore parental involvement in homework is hugely encouraged.

Purpose of Homework

Homework is given in A.V.E.T.N.S. to:

- reinforce what the child learns during the day.
- provide a link between teacher and parent.
- develop a child's concentration skills and develop a work ethic.

ASPIRATIONS

Homework is meant to be achievable by a child, i.e. it provides an opportunity to practice work already done. The teacher in class normally prepares it. 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 individual ability - no more, no less.

HOW OFTEN IS HOMEWORK GIVEN?

Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays with three exceptions:- If homework has been neglected during the week.- In senior classes some project work may be undertaken at weekends. Extra homework may 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. It is not in the school policy, but at the school's discretion to provide work for children who are absent for extended periods eg holidays, sickness.

CONTENT

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.

Parents of Junior classes given information about homework content at the information meeting held with Junior teachers in September. Parents are reminded of the homework policy and expectations at formal and informal parent teacher meetings.

Children often feel that reading and "learning by heart" is not real homework. Parents/ Guardians can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned ensuring this work is done well.

TIME GUIDELINES

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.

Infants 0 - 10 minutes

Senior Infants Up to 20 minute

Rang 1 - 2 Up to 30 minutes

Rang 3 - 4 Up to 50 minutes

Rang 5 - 6 Up to 1 hour

PARENTAL \ GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

Parents \ Guardians can help their children with homework by providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework and by trying to prevent interruptions or distractions, like T.V. or other children. Children should do written homework themselves and Parents\Guardians should only help when the child has difficulty.

If a child has difficulty with homework, the Parents\Guardians 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. Parents should encourage their children to read every night. The local library in Drogheda is a great resource. Indeed they could even read some of the newspaper with help.

Parents are encouraged to make appointments with class teachers or the principal to discuss issues relating to homework.

Learning- / Language Support

Class and support teachers will liaise to decide allotment of appropriate homework. It is acknowledged by all parties that children with special educational needs may require differentiated homework.

MONITORING HOMEWORK AT HOME

Parents\Guardians should check and sign a child's Homework Journal every evening as the pupil's journal is an important record of the child's homework. It is also a valuable means of communication between Parents\Guardians and teachers. Ideally, all written messages to your child's teacher should be put in the Homework Journal in the "Friday" or "Comment" sections of a particular week.

Please check your child's journal for such notes on a regular basis.

Infant classes do not have homework journals at A.V.E.T.N.S. The class teacher will give weekly instructions for homework on a sheet in each child's homework folder. At the teacher's discretion, homework may be collected daily or at the end of the week. Each teacher will clarify this for their class.

MONITORING HOMEWORK AT SCHOOL

Ideally teachers like to check homework on a daily basis, however with large class numbers it is not always possible to check each child's Homework Journal 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. Sometimes, under the direction of the teacher, children themselves may check some items of homework or class work. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children.

COMMUNICATION ABOUT HOMEWORK

In the relevant section of the Homework Journal, please inform your child's teacher when:

- your child cannot do homework due to family circumstances.
- your child cannot do homework because she/he cannot understand some aspect.
- the time being spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time. For infant classes, a note can be sent to school in your child's homework folder

DOING HOMEWORK

Each family situation is different but, ideally, homework should be done before any television is watched soon after school while your child is still fresh. Some children, however, need a break before starting homework. Nevertheless 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 purpose of this policy. Should this happen on a regular basis, please contact the class teacher, by making an appointment through the office.

HOMEWORK NOT COMPLETED

It is school policy to value homework as an important part of a child's education. Parents will be informed if homework is not completed on a regular basis. Non completion of homework is considered unacceptable behaviour and persistent failure to complete homework may result in sanctions.

Responsibility for this policy:	Orla
Presented to all staff:	10 th October, 2011
Presented to parents (via website):	October, 2011
Presented to Board:	December, 2011