

St. Brendan's Boys P.S.



The area of School Homework was examined and policy reviewed in 2023/2024 through the 6 step School-Self-Evaluation process. The context of this review was that the existing homework policy dated back to 2007 and although reviewed at staff meetings we had never really taken the full term and implementation to review. Homework impacts a lot of pupil-teacher relationships and can be source of home-school issues. In recent years since 2019 / COVID etc there had been much discussion in the media and beyond about the merits of homework- Indeed; should homework be banned ? !

As life and society has changed since 2007 we felt this is was the correct time to now move our joint approach to homework to match these societal changes.

To this end we surveyed all pupils and parents (Survey Monkey)

- What is the value of homework to each pupil in the short-term and longer-term on their education Journey?
- How does homework impact your family life?
- Does homework allow you to see how your son is learning at school?
- Would your son read / write / research / study at home if there was no formal homework?
- Which core areas should homework prioritize?
- Would you like a more flexible school approach to homework ? IE- Child can complete any night before Thursday / Friday.

The results of **parent survey** were conclusive as almost 90% still saw value in homework. Changing how we give homework to be more flexible and family friendly was also to the fore with only 20% in favour of retaining existing practices. The core subjects of reading , maths , writing and spelling were prioritized in that order. Parents also indicated they valued homework as it allowed them to see how their son was doing at school as well as developing important study and independent work habits.

The **teaching staff** were also surveyed to get a good insight into existing classroom practice and how they viewed the area of homework. Almost 80% indicated that current policy and approach “needed to change and adapt to match family life”. Over 90% felt homework should be adapted to be more flexible. Over 90% of teachers felt there should be a time limit to homework as a rough guide to teachers , parents and pupils. Almost 80% also felt that non-completion of homework needed to be addressed in policy and sanctions agreed.

In conclusion, our school community are in agreement to the retention of homework and adapting current practice to work in unison with modern family life.

Board of Management update from Agreed Report (Oct 2024)

- Our school capital building work has almost completed the Tender stage. We hope that these go well and that we receive approval and funding from the DES to begin construction in 2025.
- We are sad to see Ms Maeve Ryder depart for a new teaching position in her local school in Galway. Maeve was thanked for her 15 years service as an excellent teacher at our school and we wish her well. Mr Seamus Hogan has moved from supply to 3rd class.
- School admission notice for 2025/2026 approved and published with special class places available outlined along with application deadlines. New circular 80/2024 will be brought to attention of all new applicants for special class.
- Teachers croke park hours plan for 24/25 approved by BOM. Principal outlined the successful completion of the 23/24 hours plan and thanked staff for their support. New CP staff wellness sessions (one per term) have begun (HIP Psychology) and good feedback to date. Thanks to BOM for support.
- New “Bi Cinealta” (Anti-Bullying) procedures viewed. School to prepare 24/25 to introduce 25/26. Staff CPD to follow later this year.
- Principal gave report on day to day school activities including sports, ICT, attendance , child safeguarding , anti-bullying, prayer service and sacramental preparation.
- Boys in Gaelic Cumann na Mbunscoil final in O’Connor park Tullamore with thanks to Mr Kennedy for all his work coaching and supporting the team .

Parent—Teacher meetings 2024

We will be holding our Parent-Teacher meetings on Wednesday 20th and Thursday 21st November from 3pm -6pm.

The process is as follows:

- School will close for all pupils at 2.30pm each day (Wednesday and Thursday) to allow school and families prepare for meetings. The 1 hour involved will be matched in the school Croke Park hour programme. The early closure will allow parents to safely take pupils home and return for meetings. There were a number of pupils around the school last year during the PT times and school is not responsible for pupils at this time.
- Each meeting will be allocated a ten minute slot and we ask for your understanding in keeping with these time slots.
- If you are unable to attend, please feel free to arrange another time suitable to you and class teacher.
- Meetings take place in classrooms and there will be chairs outside to wait. We ask all to be mindful of “ Dignity at work” policy which is available to view on school website.
- Resource and learning support teachers will also be available to meet with parents of their pupils where requested.
- Timetable will be created from the app CALENDLY and each class teacher will send parents a link. We ask for your co-operation with organising our timetable.
- If teacher receives no reply they will choose you a time slot.

Thank you for your co-operation with this process which is so important in our home-school communication and please remember that we are all aiming towards the common goal of helping all of the boys to reach their potential.
Kind regards, Niall Crofton (Principal)

Christmas at school

Once again we bring this message to our families. As a catholic school, each year we have Christmas shows , advent assemblies , concerts and activities. It is a special time when we prepare for and celebrate the birth of baby Jesus. Our ethos is inclusive so we allow all to take part. If a child has other beliefs then we respect their right to those and do not impose on them. Likewise we must insist that all pupils respect the right of families and pupils to celebrate the magic and uniqueness of Christmas-Santa and all that this brings both in class and at play.
We look forward to this special season!

Maths week 2024

Well done to our @mathsweek school winners of “who am I ? “ daily problems set by Ms Ryan who led our maths week 2024 events -congrats to Charlie , Rahim and

Oisín ★★ ★ @mathsweek2024

Thanks to Ms Ryan for co-ordinating and to all the class teachers and SEN teachers for supporting.

Our task for this term is to look at the existing concrete maths resources in our school and plan to purchase new resources for every classroom so that we can support the new learning activities outlined in the new Primary Math Curriculum.

Dates for your diary:

Community school Musical—Wed 13th November 7.30pm (5th/ 6th group)

PT meetings—Wed 20th and Thurs 21st November 2024

St Brendan's day—10am mass—Friday 29th Nov 2024-all welcome

Junior Infant HSE vaccinations—Wed 4th December 2024

Panto in Theatre—Monday 9th December—JI /SI / 1st

PA Christmas Draw—Tuesday 17th December 2024

Christmas Holidays : Friday 20th December from 12.20pm-12.30pm

School reopens : Monday 6th January 2025

Homework @ St Brendan's PS

Sincere thanks to the many parents and families who replied to our survey last term. The information and views gathered from parents and staff were collated together to help us form a new homework policy for our school.

This policy came into affect on 4th November 2024 as was ratified by our Board of Management . The policy is shared on our website along with other school policies for parents to view. PTO For introduction and rationale.

