



# Homework Policy

## The Nature of Homework

Homework is work assigned by a subject teacher for completion by the pupil outside of school time. Its purpose is to enhance learning by the pupils. It may be written, oral, aural, reading, project based work or revision work. Homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work. Homework will be purposeful, designed to enhance pupil feedback. It should be directed and relevant to the subject and ability of the pupil. We subscribe to a quality rather than a quantity principle.

Each pupil's academic ability and learning styles should be taken into account both in the type of homework set and in the terms of its assessment. In mixed ability classes Differentiation should be applied in the setting of homework.

All pupils should spend time at home on their studies whether or not work has been assigned. If no specific homework has been set then pupils have an obligation to go over material they have recently studied in class.

The school encourages designed experiential learning which is outside of normal curriculum activity – examples include physical exercise, art, music, drama, etc.

## Reasons why homework is valuable

1. It can reinforce class-work and aid assimilation.
2. It can develop skills of a subject through practice e.g. Language skills, mathematical skills, skills of comprehension ...
3. Homework can be used to promote literacy and numeracy.
4. It can encourage revision.
5. It can be a method of assessment enabling the teacher to diagnose what has been learnt and what still needs to be developed.
6. It provides opportunity to practice examination style questions.
7. It can develop better self-directed learning
8. It can facilitate the use of research and of resources not readily accessible in class.

## Organising homework

From the beginning of First Year each pupil is expected to establish a homework routine. Each pupil is expected to keep a record of all homework in his/her homework diary, which is given by the school to the pupils specifically for this purpose at the start of the school year.

- The homework journal should be brought to every class and be available on the pupil's desk.
- All homework given must be noted in the journal.
- Homework should be noted on the day it has been assigned.
- Indication that the homework has been completed is encouraged by crossing the entry in the journal out.
- Form Teachers should check journals of forms 1-2 on a designated morning.
- Class teachers may communicate with parents using the journal where there is a problem with homework or to reinforce positive study and behaviour.
- Where homework is consistently not completed or is unsatisfactory Form Teachers or the Co-ordinators will contact parents and impose sanctions as they deem appropriate.
- Parents are encouraged to read the homework journal and support home study (see role of parents).

Teachers endeavour to ensure pupils are clear what the homework involves well before the class ends. Generally homework when being assigned will be written on the board.

Every pupil should enter the written homework into the correct subject copy or folder as instructed. It should be dated e.g. homework for day/month/year. The title of the work / question should be clearly written. This assists with revision.

The school expects that all homework is completed on time, presented on time and to the best of the pupil's ability in a neat and tidy fashion. Meeting homework deadlines may not be always easy for pupils. They should not be excused homework, but may need extra help with strategies to manage it.

***If a pupil has been absent from class on a school activity, or has been ill, it is their responsibility to find out what work has been set and to complete it as soon as possible. Parents are encouraged to monitor such work and ensure this is collected and completed (see role of parents).***

### **The amount of homework appropriate for pupils of different ages:**

The intrinsic value of homework activities is far more important than the precise amount of time devoted to them. Best practice suggests that the amount of time that should be spent by pupils at Second Level, on average, on homework should fall within the following ranges:

- First Year                      1- 1½ hours
- Second Year                    1½ – 2 hours
- Third Year                      2 – 2 1/2 hours
- Transition Year                1 ½ -2 hours average (depending on projects and activities)
- Fifth Year                      2½ – 3 hours
- Sixth Year                      3 hours. Weekend study and revision is also essential.

Teachers are encouraged when giving homework to be aware of the total recommended time span for the age group. Some tasks will be completed quickly and correctly without much apparent effort. Other tasks will take longer and appear more challenging. This will vary according both to the ability and interests of the student and to the nature of the work set.

It is very important that homework, including sanctions for not completing it, should be consistently applied across the school so that all pupils see the arrangements as fair.

### **The role of parents / guardians in supporting pupils**

- Parents are encouraged, as far as possible, to provide a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which pupils can do their homework free of distractions such as television, mobile phone, social networking e.g. provide suitable desk, chair, adequate light and heat.
- A regular time should be set aside for homework. Parents can play an important role in helping pupils to organise their work.
- Parents can help by showing a positive interest in the work being done rather than just demanding its completion. However, parents are asked not “to do” the homework.
- Parents should communicate with class teacher when their son / daughter cannot for any reason do the homework– the journal may be used for this or a note written if this is more appropriate. Parents may also communicate with the class teacher at parent/teacher meetings regarding homework.
- Since computers are an integral part of today’s world, it is inevitable and essential that the Internet is a source for much of their research. Parents are encouraged to monitor their child’s use of the Internet. See the school’s “Acceptable Use Policy” document.

### **Feedback for pupils**

Homework will be marked or commented on on a regular basis in a manner that is encouraging to the pupil

A variety of methods are used to correct homework depending on the type of homework and the age of the children. Methods of correcting home work include -

- Teacher collects and corrects the work
- Work is corrected in class
- Pupils exchange work for correction
- Pupils write out answers in the form of a test

- Some items of homework (and class work) may be checked by pupils themselves under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for pupils.
- Oral questioning

The attitude of pupils to homework will be taken into account in the awarding of effort marks and in the end of term report for parents.

### **Special educational needs**

In setting homework for pupils with special needs teachers are encouraged to balance the right of pupils to share fully in the work of the class, including homework tasks, with their individual learning needs. These needs may include consolidation and reinforcement of specific skills. For some pupils, the continuing involvement of parents is very valuable.

Subject teachers will collaborate where possible with Learning Support teacher to ensure class tasks are manageable, and individual skill practice can be incorporated without overloading the pupil.

Subject teachers will, wherever possible, guide the gifted pupil in their learning and research.

Differentiated homework is encouraged to meet individual pupil needs and to challenge pupils at the appropriate level.

### **Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating this homework policy**

This homework policy will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess its effectiveness.

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