



Homework Policy

Homework is an essential part of a student's education and therefore plays a vital role in the learning process in the school. The staff of St. Mary's Secondary School place great emphasis on the setting of purposeful, well planned homework, which is designed to assist each student in reaching her full potential. This policy is rooted in the Mission statement/aims of the school.

A wide variety of homework assignments are set by teachers. Homework will be well structured and clearly defined and may consist of

- Written work
- Learning
- Aural work
- Research for projects and writing up of project briefs
- Preparation of material necessary for practical work in school
- Studying
- Revision
- Drawing / Art work
- Reading
- ICT

The above list is not exhaustive.

Objectives of Homework

- It provides students with an opportunity to review, consolidate and confirm the knowledge which they have received during the day.
- It allows students an opportunity to work on their own and take responsibility for their own learning.
- It creates opportunities for meaningful dialogue between home and school.
- It enables teachers to assess progress effectively, challenge pupils and identify areas of student difficulty.
- It provides parents/guardians with information on their daughters progress at school.
- It encourages students to reach their full potential with regard to their academic capabilities.

- It fosters in students positive values such as self discipline, responsibility and an interest in learning which will benefit them throughout their lives.
- Exam preparation.

Rules and Responsibilities

Board of Management

- To ensure that the policy is developed and evaluated from time to time
- To approve the policy
- To consider reports from the Principal on the implementation of the policy

Principal, Deputy and Year Heads

- To establish structures and procedures for the implementation of the policy
- To monitor the implementation of the policy
- To instruct students in homework/study skills

Teachers

- To implement the policy, review homework assignments and provide feedback to students
- To keep records of homework set
- To instruct students in homework/study skills
- To be consistent in the amount of homework given
- To inform parents/guardians of concerns as they arise
- To ensure that homework is assessed and acknowledged
- To implement sanctions for homework not completed
- To assist students with the preparation of homework
- To set achievable standards of homework.

Parents/Guardians

- To encourage students to achieve their full potential by supporting school policy
- To ensure a quiet room where homework can be completed away from distractions of television, radio, mobile phones and other people
- To encourage students to spend sufficient time at homework and revision each night
- To check and sign journals regularly
- To encourage students to use their time wisely between study, rest and recreation. Part-time work is a serious distraction and interferes with progress.
- To encourage students to attend study classes if provided.
- To attend Parent/Teacher meetings

- To fully support the school in any sanctions employed to deal with homework not completed
- To provide teachers with valid letters of explanation in the event of homework not being submitted.

Students

- To record all assigned homework in assigned homework journal. Each day students should have listed the classes they have for the day on the left- hand column and the homework, whether written or oral in the right-hand column
- To treat homework as an important part of school life that demands time and attention each day. We recommend the following time guidelines for study:-
 1. First Year 1-2 hours
 2. Second and Third 2-3 hours
 3. Transition Year 2 hours
 4. Fifth and Sixth Years 3-4 hours

Pupils who are sitting for State Examinations/house exams will probably require more time as exam time approaches. LCA students must devote a satisfactory amount of time to the completion of project work.

- To be fully prepared for their classes. This will require careful study at home to ensure that homework set in class, both oral/learning and written/practical is completed thoroughly to the best of their ability.
- To present written homework properly.
- To include time for study and review of what has been covered and preparation for the following day
- Weekends/breaks may be used for additional study and revision
- To prepare for homework by asking questions to identify what is important and to clarify information as the class progresses
- To ensure that Homework Journal is signed by parents/guardians as requested for checking by subject teacher – Class Tutor or Year Head when required.

Sanctions

In classes where homework is not completed, an appropriate and consistent sanction should be imposed by the teacher eg.

- Verbal reprimand
- Written comment in journal
- Relevant extra homework
- Contact parents – Year Head/Teacher concerned
- Standard letter to parents/guardians

- An individual teacher may detain the pupil during break/lunchtime until the work is completed

(- the above are in no particular order -)

Success Criteria

- Good quality homework is being presented
- There is a reduction in the pressure on students in relation to homework
- Parents/guardians, teachers and students are satisfied with the effectiveness of the policy
- The goals are being attained

Monitoring Procedures

- Principal, Deputy Principal and Year heads will conduct ongoing monitoring through informal discussion with students and subject teachers, and through homework spot checks, and will note feedback from students, teachers and parents/guardians.
- Subject Departments will review implementation at regular intervals.
- Principal and Deputy Principal may meet with Subject Departments, Year Heads and pastoral Care personnel at regular intervals.

Review Procedures

The policy will be reviewed after two years. The review team will comprise of the Principal, Deputy Principal and Year Heads.

- Views and experiences of teachers, students and parents/guardians will be surveyed in relation to the success criteria
- The progress of students with special educational needs will be given particular consideration

This policy has been formulated following collaboration and consultation with staff, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians and Board of Management.

Ratified 02/06/2009