

# Homework Policy



"Live as free people"

## St Peter's Community School

Approved November 2017

### **Scope**

This policy applies to the entire school community, i.e. students, parents and teachers. From the beginning of First Year each student is expected to establish a homework routine. The term 'Homework' is more than written exercises. It is any subject-based work assigned by a teacher and includes reading, writing, drawing, thinking, memorising, revising and studying.

### **Relationship to the School's Mission Statement**

This policy gives practical expression to St. Peter's fundamental aim to develop the student's full potential, foster a love of learning and contribute to future success.

### **Rationale**

Full participation in the school's academic programme requires the satisfactory completion of set homework. Regular homework is a valuable aspect of the learning process and contributes to the development of sound study skills. It consolidates and supplements the work done in class through students revisiting and reflecting on what they have learnt. This promotes independent learning and creativity. When a student falls behind in their work it is more difficult to keep up with class work and classes become even more difficult. The policy was drawn up in order to have a consistent approach to homework and a sense of responsibility for homework amongst all the partners. However, it recognises that the final responsibility for satisfactory completion of homework rests with the student.

### **Aims**

The aim of this policy is to encourage the completion of all homework and to the satisfaction of the teacher. This in turn will enhance pupil learning.

- To improve the effectiveness of the homework journal:
  - Students record all homework in their journal and tick off homework once completed.
  - Homework journals are to be inspected and signed every week by a parent/guardian.
  - Journals can be inspected at the discretion of the Class Tutor.
- To promote student development of organising time and work, responsibility for learning, good study habits and effective study skills.
- To enable subject teachers and Class Tutors to assess pupil progress effectively and to raise the achievement levels of all pupils.
- To encourage parents to take an interest and supportive role in relation to homework.

## **POLICY CONTENT**

### **Roles Regarding Homework**

#### **Teachers:**

- Are expected to set regular homework on topics covered in class. It should be of value and suited to the ability of the student. It should not take up a disproportionate amount of student's time. A record should be kept of set homework.
- Where appropriate and applicable, teachers will endeavour to achieve that work is differentiated to ensure special needs are catered for. The varying abilities of students will be considered when setting and inspecting homework.
- Should explain homework assignments clearly and allocate time to allow pupils to record homework in their journals.
- Are expected to correct homework and maintain appropriate records.
- Provide feedback to the student which is constructive.
- May assign homework during holiday periods.
- Should notify parents, in the student journal, if a student's performance at homework does not meet the school's expectations, or of any difficulties regarding their child's homework.
- In consultation with other teachers in their subject department, will review homework at the start of each school year and monitor its use.
- Must implement the policy.

#### **Students**

- Are expected to take responsibility for their homework.
- Must record all homework in the journal – both written work and learning work.
- Must get parents to sign the diary every week. The journal must be kept free of graffiti.
- Should have the required copy books for each subject and enter written homework in the correct copy. Homework should be dated.
- Should make an honest effort to complete homework and present it on the date specified by the teacher.
- In doubt about homework should ask the teacher for clarification.
- Are expected to present their work in a tidy and organised fashion.
- Absent due to school-related activities (e.g. matches) must ensure that homework set in their absence is completed.
- Absent for a period of time are expected to make every effort to complete work missed while absent.

- To present a verification note at the beginning of class if extenuating circumstances (health/domestic) result in no homework.

### Parents

Parents have a vital role to play in helping their children to achieve their full potential while at school. A positive and supportive home environment in which school and schoolwork are seen to be important provides an excellent starting point. All available evidence suggests that pupils of parents who show real interest in their children's education have a much better chance of making a success of their time at school.

Parents:

- Should provide adequate facilities to enable your child undertake their homework properly, if at all possible a quiet room with proper lighting and heating. It is not possible to do homework effectively while watching television or listening to loud music.
- Must ensure that the suggested amount of time is spent on homework.
- Are expected to examine the homework journal and sign it weekly.
- Must provide an explanation note in the event that homework is not completed. If your child is experiencing difficulty with homework please contact the school and request a meeting with the Year Head.
- Should encourage and support your child, e.g. discuss your child's homework with him/her, listen to what they have learnt, help your child to draw up a study timetable which takes into account all weekly activities such as study, leisure, television and ensure your child gets adequate rest and sleep.
- Are requested to fully support the school in any sanctions used to deal with matters relating to homework as neglect of homework can only result in underachievement.
- Should attend parent/teacher meetings and make an appointment to meet teachers if there are problems that need to be discussed.
- Should discourage your child from engaging in part-time work during the school week. Weekend work should not be allowed to interfere unduly with school work.
- Are asked not to keep your child home from school unless it is absolutely necessary. Medical and other appointments should be arranged for outside of school hours if at all possible.

### Duration of Homework

The amount of time taken to complete homework will vary from student to student and from year to year. Nonetheless parents/pupils may find the following broad time allocation useful.

First Year	1.5 hours per night
Second Year	2 to 2.5 hours per night
Third Year	2.5 to 3 hours per night
Fourth Year	1.5 to 2 hours per night
Fifth Year	3 to 4 hours per night
Sixth Year	4 hours+ per night and dedicated weekend study

Senior cycle students should aim to incorporate homework and exam revision into their study. Pupils who are sitting for state/house examinations will probably require more time as exam time approaches.

### Special Needs Students

In setting homework for students with special needs teachers are encouraged to balance the right of students to share fully in the work of the class, including homework, with their individual learning needs. Subject teachers will collaborate where possible with the learning support co-ordinator to ensure tasks are manageable for the student.

### Homework Sanctions

Failure to do homework and return it promptly will result in sanctions. In the event of failure to attempt homework the teacher will record this and give the student a second chance to do the work. If the student re-offends, the teacher may impose reasonable sanctions with a view to bringing about improvement:

- Verbal reprimand.
- An individual teacher may detain the pupil during break/lunchtime until the work is completed.
- If a student persistently fails to co-operate and produce homework, or whose work is consistently unsatisfactory, the teacher may put the student on the school detention system and/or make contact with the parents.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to the responsibilities already outlined in relation to homework, the following parties have a role to play to further support the area of homework.

### **Board of Management**

The Board will consider reports from the Principal on the implementation of the policy and subsequently approve it.

### **The School**

School management provides the following structures:

- Study skills seminars for students.
- Supervised study for students in sixth, fifth and third years. This is available after school 4 – 6 p.m. for all students who wish to avail of the service. The facility is extended to Saturdays and holiday breaks for sixth year students.
- The Principal will monitor the implementation of the policy and ensure it is evaluated and if necessary developed.

### **Subject Departments**

- Each subject department will have particular homework guidelines. Teachers will advise students of these requirements.
- Each department will endeavour, if applicable, to strike a balance between written/practical work and oral/learning work.

### **Pastoral Care Personnel**

- Will monitor the effects of the policy and identify students experiencing difficulty.
- Will provide support and guidance for those students and liaise with subject teachers, especially in relation to consideration for students with special educational needs.

### **Special Needs Department**

Will advise subject teachers on designing homework for students with special educational needs.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES**

- Each subject department will develop guidelines in relation to homework in their own subject areas.
- Class Tutors will instruct their class groups on the policy including the time guide.

## **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

- If the school partners are satisfied with the effectiveness of the policy.
- If work is accurately recorded and presented in a manner corresponding with the student's ability.
- If the incidence of incomplete homework or failure to produce any homework is reduced and students have a better knowledge of course material.

## **MONITORING PROCEDURES**

- The student's journals shall be monitored periodically by the Class Tutor – to check for recording of homework and parent/guardian signature or comment.
- A record will be kept. Student copies shall be examined regularly by the relevant subject teacher to check for completion of homework and organisation of work.
- Subject departments will review implementation after three months.

## **REVIEW PROCEDURES**

This policy will be reviewed annually by subject departments at the beginning of the school year. The policy will be reviewed by the parents, students and the Board of Management as appropriate.