

*Ballinteer Community School*



# Homework Policy

## **1. Introduction**

The Homework and Study policy is a guide for students, teachers and parents/guardians on how to improve classroom learning and fulfill students' true potential. It is intended to nurture self-discipline and encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning, thus preparing them for the role they will play in the society of the future.

Learning is a lifelong skill and many strategies can be employed to improve learning. Homework reinforces and extends classroom learning. Assessment for Learning helps students to manage their learning. Study/Revision embeds that learning. It is therefore essential that students develop good classroom skills, develop strategies to improve learning and refine study and time management skills to assist the learning process.

## **2. Relationship to Ballinteer Community School Mission Statement.**

The school is committed to providing quality education to its students. The school is dedicated to imparting to them strong moral values, a love of learning, concern for others and the skills necessary to lead purposeful and meaningful lives in their communities. The ethos of the school is Christian and is nurtured in an inclusive and meaningful way so that students of all religious traditions have a strong conviction of Faith and the intellectual curiosity and religious commitment to develop and deepen their knowledge of it.

The Homework and Study policy aims to assist the academic development of all students in Ballinteer Community School so that they learn how to improve and develop their individual talents and abilities and achieve their full potential. It is intended to encourage students to effectively manage their own learning and make a positive contribution to society.

### **3. Rationale**

This policy statement has been produced on the basis of consultation with staff, parents and students. It is designed to provide a coherent framework from which departments can develop a consistent and effective approach to homework taking into consideration students of all ages and levels of ability.

At Ballinteer Community School we believe that homework is important in:

- Reinforcing positive attitudes to work
- Encouraging self-organisation and self-discipline
- Reinforcing, broadening and extending the school curriculum
- Developing home/school partnership
- Preparing pupils for life opportunities and experiences

### **4. Why is homework important?**

There are many reasons for setting homework, the most important ones being:

- To encourage and develop self-discipline and study habits.
- To reinforce class work and consolidate learning.
- To assist in the development of Assessment for Learning.

- To give pupils experience of working on their own, and to develop in pupils a sense of responsibility for, and commitment to, their own learning.
- To allow for the development of good research practices.
- To involve parents/guardians in the educational process and provide an insight into the work of the student.

## **5. Principles underlying homework policy and practice**

Homework should be carefully planned and be an integral part of course work.

- Homework should be differentiated to meet the individual needs of the students.
- Students should be adequately prepared for the completion of tasks set.
- Homework should be issued to all year groups, in all subjects and to all students.
- Homework should be issued in appropriate quantities and completion dates should be both clear and reasonable.

## **6. Types of Homework**

Homework tasks should be set to reflect ongoing class work across the curriculum. The list below is not exhaustive.

Homework can take the form of:

- Completing work begun in class.

- Further examples of tasks undertaken in class and is designed to reinforce what has been learned.
- Reviewing, and, if appropriate, memorising what has been learned in class.
- Follow-up work to assessment, ensuring that the student learns from errors.
- Individual planning of a programme of homework/study. This is seen as a key study skill, central to the successful organisation and completion of homework programmes.
- Researching using a variety of sources including ICT.
- Project, exercise or task, based on previous class work to extend classroom learning.

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities**

Teachers, students, parents/guardians and school management have a role to play in developing and implementing the homework/study policy. It can be viewed as a collaborative approach on the part of these four groups to the giving and monitoring of homework.

### **Teachers:**

- Assign homework or ask students to review classwork in the majority of classes.
- Give adequate time with clear instructions during class to assign homework and record homework on the board for the students to take down in their journal.
- Assign homework that is relevant to the subject area.

- Give students an opportunity to ask for clarification on homework assignments.
- Set out success criteria and expectations for certain assignments.
- Assign a variety of homework types.
- Set clear deadlines for the completion of homework.
- Monitor and record the homework assignments and give feedback in a variety of forms.
- Oversee peer and self-assessment.
- Mark homework in a way that is helpful to students. This can take the form of grade marking and/or comment marking where feedback to the student is given in three key areas: (a) what the student has done well (b) what the student needs to improve on (c) what steps the student should take to improve performance or understanding.
- Write a positive note in the student's journal if homework is completed by the student to a very high standard.

### **Students:**

- Record homework in their journals at the time it is given.
- Find out and make up for work missed through any school/class absence.
- Ask for clarification on any aspect of homework they do not understand.
- Complete all assigned homework to the best of their ability.
- Keep to deadlines. Setting a reminder of deadlines in your phone will help you.
- Review/Revise work on a regular basis.

- File any assignments and supplementary material in a subject folder/copy and hand up to teachers when requested.
- The students are responsible for bringing home the correct books/equipment in order to complete their homework

#### **Parents/Guardians:**

- Ensure that their child attends school regularly.
- Ensure that their child spends the recommended time at his/her homework (see section 9).
- Check their child's journal regularly to ensure work is being completed.
- Provide an appropriate place for study/homework.
- Ensure that the radio/television/telephone/computer and other devices do not interfere with their child's studying.
- Write an explanatory note in the journal if their child requires an extension on his/her homework.
- Check and sign their child's journal when required.

#### **Management:**

- Support the implementation of the policy.
- Monitor the implementation of the homework/study policy.
- Emphasise the importance of homework as an integral part of the school life.
- Ensure that structures and procedures are in place for the consistent implementation of the policy in consultation with the Guidance Counselor and School Completion Officer.
- Meet with parents/guardians regarding homework issues when appropriate.

## **8. Procedures to be followed when homework has not been completed/returned**

1. Teaching staff should issue a warning to the student when homework is not completed on the first occasion. A record of action should be kept.
2. On a second breach, the student will receive additional homework assigned by the teacher. The parent/guardian will be required to sign this additional work.
3. Should a third breach occur, the teacher will inform the Year Head who will issue a homework alert letter highlighting serious concerns to the parent/guardian (see appendix 1).
4. If the matter is not resolved, the Year Head will then seek a parental appointment to discuss concerns.
5. If there is no improvement, the student is referred to the Deputy Principal/Principal.

## **9. Further Aids to Learning**

In order to develop and sustain good study habits, students may find the following tips useful:

### **Classroom Skills:**

Most learning is done in the classroom. The more effort applied during class, the easier it is to revise that material later on. Students should:

- Be willing to learn.
- Listen effectively in class. This means make notes of the main



points of the lesson and actively engage in class.

- Be prepared and on time for class. This means having all books and equipment with you and all homework completed.
- Be prepared for a test and know the test criteria.
- Don't be afraid to make a mistake and don't give up on your first attempt. The classroom is a safe environment in which to make an error and learn from it. Ask questions.

### **Improving Learning:**

Assessment for Learning is a process that supports you in recognising and reflecting upon learning strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers may provide feedback on a test/assignment you have done in the form of a grade and or comment. To improve on tests/assignments students could:

- Set a target grade that you would like to achieve in each subject.
- Make a note of the things you did well and the things you need to improve on.
- Set specific goals on what you are going to do to improve each test or assignment.
- Re-do the test or assignment in the light of focused study on areas in need of improvement.
- Making regular improvements to your work should keep you on course to achieve your target grade.

### **Time-Management:**

One of the most important resources a student has is time. Learning to manage it properly is one of the key things that will help you stay on top of course work and be prepared for exams. You should acquire the skills

to manage your time in order to ensure that the time you spend studying produces the maximum amount of learning.

A rough guide to how long you should spend every day on homework and study is as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Year : 1.5 hours a day
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Year : 2 hours a day
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Year : 2.5 - 3 hours a day
- 4<sup>th</sup> Year : 2 hours a day
- 5<sup>th</sup> Year : 3 - 4 hours a day
- 6<sup>th</sup> Year : 3 - 4 hours a day

Exam classes may need to allocate additional time to go over areas of difficulty.

# APPENDIX 1

## HOMEWORK ALERT LETTER

### Serious Concern

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I am sorry to inform you that your child has

a) not returned the appropriate homework in his/her class. ☐

b) made a poor attempt at homework in his/her class. ☐

It is very important that all homework tasks are completed to a satisfactory level and are handed in on time.

Please discuss the importance of completing homework with your child. I am sure that with your support your child will realise that completing homework on time will help to improve his/her progress.

Please complete the tear off slip below and give it to your child to return to me along with the homework. This will let me know you are aware of the present difficulties.

Yours sincerely

\_\_\_\_\_

Year Head

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Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

I have discussed the importance of homework with my child. I have ensured that my child has now completed the homework exercise and returned it to the teacher concerned. I will make sure that all homework is completed on time in the future.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

