

## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

Our Homework Policy aims to be consistent with the Mission Statement and aims of the School.

### **Rationale for Policy**

In St. Paul's homework is an essential part of the teaching and learning process. It supplements and reinforces work done in the classroom. Homework, when done regularly, contributes to the development of sound study skills and promotes co-operation, responsibility, independent learning and creativity. It enhances academic achievement and provides skills for lifelong learning.

### **Goals**

- ❑ To ensure consistent approaches on the part of individual teachers to the setting and reviewing of homework.
- ❑ To revise and reinforce work done in class, extend learning.
- ❑ To encourage parents/guardians to take an interest in and to share responsibility for their child's work and progress.
- ❑ To encourage students to work independently and to develop good study habits so that they can make proper use of time.
- ❑ To highlight gaps in learning.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Board of Management**

- ❑ To ensure policy is reviewed from time to time.
- ❑ To approve policy and support its implementation
- ❑ To receive reports on implementation

#### **Principal, Deputy Principal and Year Heads**

- ❑ To monitor the implementation of policy

#### **Staff (Subject Teachers)**

- ❑ To implement the policy
- ❑ Assign homework clearly linked to classwork and allow for differentiated homework

- ❑ To monitor and correct homework assignments and provide feedback to students
- ❑ To guide the gifted student in their learning and research
- ❑ To keep records of homework set
- ❑ Implement sanctions if homework is not done

### **Special Educational Needs Department**

- ❑ To provide information for subject teachers in relation to students with special educational needs
- ❑ To provide support and guidance for pupils experiencing difficulty
- ❑ Students with special education needs will be given due consideration.

### **Journals**

Each student is expected to use his/her school journal. Journals are available to all teachers should they wish to communicate with parents and vice versa.

A class teacher will communicate initially through the journal if a student fails to present written assignments or has failed repeatedly to complete learning assignments. A student, who for health or domestic reasons, is unable to complete her homework shall present the relevant teacher(s) with a written note to this effect from her parent(s)/guardian(s).

If a student loses his/her journal he/she will be required to replace it immediately.

### **Copybooks/Notebooks**

Every student should enter the written homework into the correct subject copy or notebook. It should be dated e.g. homework for day/month/year. The questions and answers should be clearly written. This assists with revision.

### **Appropriate amount of Homework for Students**

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

- First Year                      1½ - 2 hours
- Second Year                    2 - 2½ hours
- Third Year                      2½ - 3 hours
- Transition Year                Varies depending on project work and activities
- Fifth Year                      3 hours
- Sixth Year                      3 hours +. Blocks of weekend study and revision are also essential.

Some students will complete all tasks quickly and correctly and may appear to have given very little time to their homework. Weaker students and those with specific learning difficulties may put in huge amounts of time and effort. Teachers and parents must recognise this when considering the homework regime of any particular student.

Students who find they are consistently taking much longer than the above times should discuss this with their subject teacher or Guidance Counsellor.

It is strongly advised that students should not be employed in part-time work during term as it may interfere with their homework regime.

## **Appropriate Tasks for Homework**

The range of tasks which are appropriate for students of various ages are many and varied. Some examples are as follows:

- Written assignments
- Learning assignments
- Essay writing
- Reading
- Investigations
- Interviews
- Drill practice
- Simple experiments
- Research
- School library visit
- Public library visit
- Drafting
- Report writing
- Designing
- Revision work
- Practice of some procedure
- Problem solving
- Preparing for debates, role-plays, etc.
- Preparing for class tests or exams
- Making a model
- Drawing
- Word processing
- Projects
- Watching a television programme
- Listening to a radio article
- Written evaluation
- Bring in ingredients

The above list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Tasks have a clear objective, linked to study programmes and this is made evident to the students. Homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.

## **Guidance for Parents on Homework**

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.

### **We ask parents to:**

- ❑ Check that homework is being recorded in the journal and that homework is completed.
- ❑ Check for correspondence in the Journal. Use Journal for communication with Teacher.
- ❑ If at all possible provide a quiet room, away from distractions; a comfortable chair; proper lighting and heating. Insist that your child avails of this room. It is not possible to do homework effectively with any background distraction.
- ❑ Encourage your child. Give advice and support. We encourage you to engage in the learning process with your child. Ask how he/she is progressing at school and even if the response is brief, as is often the case with teenagers, continue to maintain an interest.
- ❑ Fully support the school in any sanctions we employ to deal with matters relating to homework. Failure to meet homework requirement is taken seriously by the school as we are aware that the neglect of homework can only result in underachievement.
- ❑ Attend parent-teacher meetings. If necessary, request an appointment through the School Office to meet teachers to discuss any concerns or issues that may arise.
- ❑ Encourage your child to draw up a study timetable which should take account of all your child's weekly activities to include valuable leisure time.
- ❑ Refrain from keeping 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. If your child does miss school/class make sure that all missed homework is attended to.
- ❑ Realise that extra study will be necessary as exam time approaches so Junior and Leaving Certificate students in particular should be encouraged to do extra study during holiday periods, and at weekend during school term.
- ❑ Ensure your child has adequate rest and sleep.
- ❑ Actively discourage weekend work during term time.

### **Guidelines for Students**

- ❑ Homework can be written, oral, research based or revision based with a balanced approach within each subject to be maintained.
- ❑ It is the student's responsibility to have their homework journal in each class everyday.
- ❑ Each pupil in St. Paul's must record all homework in his/her Homework Journal as outlined by subject teachers. Both **written work** and **learning work** must be recorded in the Homework Journal.
- ❑ Homework should be completed to the best of a student's ability and on time.
- ❑ Before you leave each class be sure that you understand clearly what your teacher expects you to do for homework. If in doubt, ask for clarification.
- ❑ If students are absent for class/school for any reason, it is **the student's responsibility** to find out details of the work that you missed. This applies also to pupils who miss classes due to sporting or other extra-curricular activities.

## **Homework Sanctions**

**Homework assignments and deadlines are set by subject teachers and must be adhered to. Lack of co-operation by pupils may be dealt with in a variety of ways such as:**

- Verbal and/or written reprimand in Journal
- Standard letter to parents
- An individual teacher may detain the pupil during break/lunchtime until the work is completed
- Discussion with parents by phone / by letter / by visit to school
- Use of the school's detention system for persistent failure to do / attempt homework

## **Performance Criteria**

- Goals are being attained
- Good quality homework will be presented
- Teachers, parents and students are satisfied with effectiveness of policy
- Student respond to marking comment with improvements/

## **Monitoring Procedures**

- Teachers will check that homework is being done
- Year Heads check journals
- Teachers report to Year Heads and to parents at Parent Teacher Meetings if homework is not being done

## **Communication of Policy**

This policy will be posted on the school web-site. It will be brought to the attention of all teaching staff, parents and students.

## **Review Procedures**

The policy will be reviewed by the School Management periodically or at the request of teachers, parents and students as the need arises at a staff meeting.

**Reviewed on:** \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson Board of Management