



## **Homework Policy**

### **Mercy Secondary School, Inchicore**

#### **The purpose of homework**

- It consolidates and reinforces skills and understanding developed at school.
- It encourages students to develop the skills, confidence, self-discipline and motivation needed to study effectively on their own. This is vital given the importance for students in the future of life-long learning and adaptability.
- It extends school learning, for example through additional reading.
- It sustains the involvement of parents in the management of students' learning and keeping them informed about the work students are doing.
- It allows the students to manage particular exam course work.
- It directs research.

#### **Types of Homework**

The term Homework should not be narrowly interpreted. A wide variety of homework assignments are set by teachers and may include:

- Written work
- Learning
- Aural work

- Revision
- Examination preparation
- Projects
- Research
- Reading
- Drawing/ Painting
- Designing and making models
- Visits to public library
- Using the internet for research
- Listening to radio programmes and watching television programmes recommended by the teacher.

From the beginning of First Year each student is expected to establish a homework routine. Each student is expected to keep a record of all homework in her Journal, which is given by the school to the students specifically for this purpose. Journals are regularly monitored and are available to all teachers should they wish to communicate with parents. Every student should enter the written homework into the correct subject copy. It should be dated e.g. homework for day/month/year. The questions and answers should be clearly written. This assists with revision. 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.

### **School Journal**

The school journal, which is distributed at the beginning of the year, is of utmost importance. Students are required to have their journals on their desks during class and with them at all times during the school day. If a student damages or loses his/her or another student's journal they will be required to replace it immediately.

The **purpose** of the journal is:

- To enable students to record all assigned homework each day. Each student should have listed the classes they have for the day in the left hand column and the homework beside it.
- To ensure that all materials required for completion of homework are brought home each evening and presented, for inspection, the following day.
- The journal is used as one of the primary methods of communication between home and school.

Journals will be monitored regularly and should always be available to teachers and parents should they wish to communicate with each other.

### **Time Allocation**

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 students at Second Level, on average, on homework should fall within the following ranges:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Amount of Homework</b>
<b>First Years</b>	1.5 Hours
<b>Second Years</b>	2 Hours
<b>Third Years</b>	2.5 Hours
<b>Transition Year</b>	Varies depending on Project work
<b>Fifth Years</b>	3 Hours
<b>Sixth Years</b>	3 Hours along with weekend study
<b>Leaving Cert Applied</b>	Keep up to date with key assignments and complete any work at home necessary to ensure deadlines are met.

The abilities and learning needs of students are very different. This table acts as a guide. Teachers and parents need to consider the varying abilities of students when setting homework or when inspecting homework.

The school expects that all homework is completed on time, presented on time and to the best of the student's ability in a neat and tidy fashion. 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. If a student has been absent the onus is on the student to discover what work has been set and to endeavour to complete it within the time given in as far as is possible. If the student has been ill a period of time will be given to the student to complete missed assignments.

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

- Parents are encouraged, as far as possible, to provide a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which students can do their homework free of distractions such as television, mobile etc e.g. Provide suitable desk, chair, adequate light and heat.
- A regular time should be set aside for homework.
- Students are encouraged to attend after-school study in Mercy Secondary School, Inchicore.

- It is the parents' /guardians' responsibility to inform the school or class teacher of any reasons why a student was unable to complete a homework assignment. A parent may communicate this through the student's journal.
- If a parent/guardian feels that his/her daughter is struggling with the amount of homework or degree of difficulty of the same he/she may communicate this to the class teacher.
- Parents/Guardians are expected to check the Journal regularly and sign notes from school personnel.
- Parents/Guardians may communicate with the class teacher when their son/daughter cannot do homework due to family circumstances.
- Parents/Guardians may communicate with class teachers 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 daughter's use of the Internet. See the school's "[Acceptable Use and Mobile Phone Policy](#)" document.

### **The role of Teachers in assigning Homework**

1. Teachers in the school will set homework, where appropriate, on topics covered in class, differentiating according to the needs and abilities of the students.
2. Teachers will explain homework assignments clearly and allocate time to allow students to record homework in their journals. Teachers will write the homework on the board or the school website and check that the students have recorded it correctly.
3. Teachers will check that homework is completed.
4. Subject teachers will first write a note in the journal regarding homework not being done or will record the no homework on VsWare
5. Correction of homework-whether written, taped or in CD or any other format, is a central element of the teaching and learning process. On that basis, teachers will correct students' work sufficiently often to maintain the integrity of the teaching and learning process.
6. Teachers will ensure that no single subject should take up a disproportionate amount of students' time to the detriment of other subjects.
7. Adequate time will be given to students to complete major assignments such as essays etc.
8. Homework will not interfere unduly with structured revision programmes during the run up to the examinations.
9. Teachers will avail of opportunities to encourage parents to become actively involved in their child's homework.
10. Students will be made aware that it is their responsibility to get details of homework assignments from classmates or their teacher if they are absent from school for any reason. Homework details are available on the school website.

11. The amount of homework will be curtailed or deadlines extended when students are involved in school related activities such as attending or taking part in a play, debate, sports event, concert etc

### **The role of the Student in Homework**

1. The teachers in Mercy Secondary School place great emphasis on setting purposeful, well planned homework which is designed to assist each student in reaching his/her full potential.
2. Students are expected to complete all homework assignments given to them by their teachers.
3. Homework should be done on time, in full and should be properly presented.
4. Each student must record all homework in their homework journal as outlined by the subject teachers. Both written work and learning work must be recorded in the journal.
5. Before you leave each class be sure that you understand clearly what your teacher expects you to do for homework. If in doubt seek clarification.
6. Your teacher will inform you of the due date for submitting homework. If in doubt, ask your teacher to clarify this.
7. Your homework journal must be signed by a parent/guardian once per week and presented to your teacher when requested.
8. If you are absent from class/school for any reason, it is your responsibility to find out details of the work that you missed. This can be accessed on the school website or from a classmate. This applies to students who miss classes due to sporting or other extra curricular activities or personal appointments.
9. Copying homework from other students is counter-productive and is regarded as a serious matter by the school. The same applies to allowing another student to copy your homework.
10. In circumstances where homework is not submitted for a genuine reason, a note of explanation is required from parents/guardians.
11. Parents/Guardians will be notified if a student's performance at homework does not meet the school's expectations.

### **Sanctions for not completing Homework.**

Homework assignments and deadlines are set by subject teachers and must be adhered to. Lack of cooperation by students may be dealt with in any of the following ways by the subject teacher:

- Subject teacher speaks to the student about his/her poor homework performance and punishment is given.
- Homework missing is then recorded on the student's VSWare.
- Student must produce homework and punishment the following class
- The subject teacher will send a note to parents/ guardians informing them of the student's failure to complete/ attempt homework and punishment.
- After numerous failed efforts to produce their homework, the subject teacher will request that the tutor/year head speak with the student.
- If no improvement occurs, the matter will be referred to the Deputy Principal. The Home School Community Liaison coordinator and the Guidance Counsellor may be involved at this stage.
- The school's detention system will be used for persistent failure to present homework.
- The school's homework club will be available for those who find homework difficult.

### **Study skills**

It is very important that students should have frequent and increasing opportunities to develop and consolidate their competence as independent learners. These can be achieved through tutorials on study skills, target setting and mentoring schemes. Intensive study skills programmes are organised for Third, Fifth and Sixth Years. The Guidance Counsellor and Learning Support teacher as well as the SPHE team address study skills for First and Second Year students. Each individual class teacher provides regular guidance on study methods within his/her own specialist subject area. Meeting homework deadlines may not always be easy for students. They should not be excused from homework, but may need extra help with strategies to manage it.

### **Classroom Poster**



# HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

Mercy Secondary School

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- Write HW into journal
- Ask the teacher to explain if you're unsure
- Attempt HW as best you can
- Catch up if you are absent

## TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

- Give meaningful HW
- Write it clearly on the board
- Explain the HW
- Check HW is done to the Student's best ability

## PARENT EXPECTATIONS

- Check your child is writing into the journal
- Give them a space to work
- Check their work
- Sign journal weekly.

This Policy was Ratified by the Board on

Signed: