



Scoil Aireagail

Homework Policy

Date:	07/11/2022
Ratified by the Board of Management:	
Review due:	

1. School Mission Statement

“Scoil Aireagail is committed to the educational welfare of its entire community. This includes staff, students, parents and the wider population we serve. We will respect and support the needs of staff and so enable them to carry out their duties efficiently and effectively. We will provide a holistic education in which each student is valued and their individual needs are recognised and catered for. We will provide a structured, caring environment enabling each student to reach their full potential and enter society as a responsible adult. This mission statement has been agreed by the staff, parents and Board of Management, the values driving the very existence of the school. Scoil Aireagail is aware of and intends to discharge its statutory obligations as a recognised school, particularly those set out in section 9 of the Educational Act 1998.”

2. Scope of the Homework Policy

This policy applies to students, parents and teachers and is in keeping with the school’s fundamental aim to encourage each student to take responsibility for herself/himself, her/his learning and her/his property, to develop her/his full potential and to acquire skills necessary for life-long learning. The Homework Policy outlines the importance of homework and the key role students, parents and teaching staff play in supporting this policy document.

3. Policy Statement

Regular homework is a key aspect of the learning process and contributes to the development of sound study skills. It consolidates, reinforces, and supplements the work done in class and promotes independent learning and creativity. This policy is in line with the School’s Mission statement.

4. Aim of the Policy

- 1.** To develop a student’s positive attitude to study and homework that builds upon a positive attitude to school, education and long-life learning.
- 2.** To value the role parents and teaching staff play in promoting effective study skills and homework routines for the student.
- 3.** To outline the action to be taken when students fail to comply with the policy guidelines.

5. Rationale for Homework Policy

Homework is an integral part of the learning process. Learning continues through the completion of homework. Teachers assign homework for many reasons.

Homework can help to:

- Review and practice what has been learned in class during the day i.e. it is an extension of classroom learning and experience. It helps with the absorption of classroom learning;
- Explore subjects in greater depth than is allowed by class time. It allows for gaining a better understanding of the subject;

- Practise new skills and concepts and enable students to become more competent in their use;
- Introduce students to independent learning – the completion of projects, the use of local library for research, the use of the internet;
- Carry out preparatory work for the next day's class;
- Develop study skills and encourage independence, self-discipline and responsibility;
- It reinforces the idea of learning as a life-long concept;
- It fosters a spirit of self-discipline. It forms a home school link thus promoting a spirit of partnership;
- It promotes responsibility and self-reliance in students. It promotes the development of individual potential. It facilitates independent learning. It can enhance self-esteem.

6. Goal of Homework Policy

To encourage good practice throughout the school without impinging on individual approaches, needs, creativities etc. of teacher and student.

1. To develop the necessary and important skills required for written examinations and maximise student performance.
2. To reduce exam stress.
3. To develop study skills, self discipline, motivation needed to study effectively on their own.
4. To be thoroughly familiar with the course content of various subjects.
5. To give students the opportunity to practice and revise work done in class.
6. To foster good study and research practices among students.
7. To encourage teachers to be consistent in assigning and checking homework.
8. To establish a record of performance and provide teachers with feedback on the student's progress.
9. To help teachers to monitor progress and to identify problem areas in their subject.
10. To engage parents involvement in students study and homework.
11. To establish and maintain a necessary communication link between the home and school.

7. Content of Policy

- A reasonable amount of homework will be assigned on a regular basis;
- Homework will be assigned and corrected as appropriate;
- Records will be kept as appropriate;
- Consideration will be given to students with special needs as appropriate;
- Students will be given guidance in homework/study skills when possible;
- Supervised study facilities will be available in the school;
- Homework is seen in a partnership context (student, staff and parents/guardians);
- In so far as is feasible staff will ensure that there is an equitable/reasonable distribution; of allocated homework within a reasonable timeframe;
- To facilitate the homework process and to provide an information link for parents a homework journal is provided;

- In the event of homework not being done/not done to a satisfactory standard, appropriate disciplinary measures may be taken.

8. Homework appropriate to age

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 on average, by second level students, on homework should fall within the following ranges:

First Year	1½ hours each day (approx 15 minutes per subject)
Second Year	1½ to 2 hours each day
Third Year	2½ hours each day
Transition Year	Varies depending on project work and activities
Fifth Year	3 hours each day (Weekend study and revision is also essential)
Sixth Year	3½ hours each day (Weekend study and revision is also essential).

The school expects that all homework is completed on time and presented on time. It should be done 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 will be given to the student to complete missed assignments. It is also necessary for both teacher and parent to ensure that there is a healthy balance between time allocated to homework and time allocated to extracurricular and leisure activities.

All students are expected to do homework and revision at weekends. Revision should be ongoing throughout the year and is especially important before exams at Christmas, Mock Exam time and summer. Some teachers may give out revision timetables prior to exams. Extra weekend revision is essential at these times.

9. Monitoring of the Policy

The effectiveness of this homework policy needs to be monitored and evaluated. It is envisaged that each subject department monitors homework within the department at subject department meetings. Teachers need to evaluate the quality of homework and the contribution it is making to learning. The system can also be evaluated through staff appraisal at staff meetings. In addition to monitoring arrangements the homework policy needs to be reviewed regularly to assess its effectiveness.

The key criterion should be the extent to which the policy is contributing to the progress students make at school and their attitude to learning.

10. Policy Control

(i) Board of Management:

- To ensure that policy is in place;
- To endorse policy;
- To facilitate implementation;
- To ensure that it is being implemented;
- To receive feedback from the principal on the implementation of the policy;
- To ensure that the policy is amended / evaluated / reviewed etc.

(ii) Principal/staff:

- To ensure that policy is in place;
- To facilitate implementation;
- To ensure that it is being implemented;
- To ensure that staff, parents and students are aware of policy and of its expectations.

(iii) Student Support Team:

- To monitor re special needs, difficulties, problems of students;
- To listen, liaise, advise students, staff and parents;
- To advise on particular skills etc required by students e.g., study skills.

11. Reviewing group

- Senior Management;
- Staff;
- Students;
- Parents;
- Board of Management.

12. Timeframe for review

Every two years or as required

13. Definition of homework and study

According to the NCCA there are four types of daily homework assignments – ***preparation, practice, extension and creative/enrichment assignments.***

Preparation

This type of assignment is intended to help students get ready for the next day's classroom lesson. For instance, a reading assignment may be given prior to a lesson. Students might be

asked to write their own discussion questions based on the reading assignment. Or, the student may be asked to complete answers to reading review questions from the text.

Practice

By successfully completing practice assignments, students have the opportunity to review and reinforce skills, knowledge, and information presented in a previous lesson. A simple example might be that after a grammar lesson, students are asked to write their own sentences and label the specific grammatical elements presented in the most recent classroom lesson.

Extension

Extension assignments ask students to expand on skills and/or concepts taught during a previous class. For example, after studying a period in history students might be asked to read an article or book pertaining to that period and report their findings to the class.

Creative/Enrichment

This assignment includes analysing, synthesising and evaluating concepts or skills already taught. Students have an opportunity to develop and apply their own ideas about a topic and prepare a presentation for the teachers or class. One example would be to assign students the task of creating an invention that would solve a problem. Another might be to write a play or short story.

In this school homework refers to tasks assigned to students by their teachers to be completed mostly outside of school hours – at home or at supervised study in school. Homework involves ongoing and regular revision of course work.

Appropriate tasks for homework

The range of tasks which is appropriate for students of various ages is many and varied. Some examples would include:

Written assignments	Learning assignments
Essay writing	Reading
Investigations	Interviews
Drill practice	Simple experiments
Research	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 documentary	Listening comprehension
Reading a newspaper article	Listening to a podcast
Survey/questionnaire	Catching up on work missed

14. The role of teachers

1. To implement in accordance with policy.
2. To assign, correct homework as appropriate.
3. To keep a record of homework given and performance of students.

Teachers can help by:

- Writing homework on the board.
- Giving students time to write homework in journals.
- Making parents aware of any problem in this area by sending a note home in the journal.
- Being aware of demands made on students in other subject areas, thereby allocating sufficient time to complete essays, projects etc.
- Ensuring homework is clearly marked to identify areas for improvement. Feedback should be constructive, practical and given in an appropriate time frame.
- Giving structured guidelines for revision.
- Ensuring that study skills are part of the SPHE programme and that appropriate study skills are outlined in each subject by the subject teacher..

Tasks should have a clear objective, linked to study programmes. They should be both challenging and interesting. Teachers are encouraged to check that their overall homework programme is meaningful and balanced in the type and scale of tasks and manageable for students. This balance is not always possible and can vary considerably from day to day. However, it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.

Feedback for students

Students look mainly to teachers for a response on the quality of their work. Effective marking and feedback have always placed demands on teachers, but both are fundamental to helping students make progress. Teachers check homework on a regular basis.

A variety of methods are used to correct homework: e.g.

- Teacher correction
- Class correction
- Class discussion
- Students exchange work for correction
- Students write out answers in the form of a test
- Some items of homework (and class work) may be checked by students themselves under the direction of a teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for students.

The school reports to parents on the progress of students and indeed reporting is a crucial part of the relationship between school and parents. Traditional school end-of-term reports that take the form of a grade or mark and a generalised comment for each subject can be reassuring and supportive for the parents of students.

Parent/teacher meetings offer valuable opportunities for the school to move beyond the marks, as it were, and to present more comprehensive assessments of progress. As well as allowing a focus on progress achieved, such meetings provide an opportunity to nominate areas that need specific attention and to indicate what needs to be done to improve student performance.

15. The role of the Tutor

1. To explain the importance of study and homework to students
2. To check the student's diaries for the recording of homework.
3. To keep an account of students' patterns of instances of no homework.

16. Homework for students with Special Educational Needs

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 tasks, with their individual learning needs. These needs may include consolidation and reinforcement of specific skills.

For some students, the continuing involvement of parents is very valuable. Subject teachers will collaborate where possible with Learning Support teacher to ensure class tasks are manageable, and individual skill practice can be incorporated without overloading the students.

17. The role of parents/guardians

Homework in our school plays an important part in the education process. It provides a link between school and home and also gives parents the opportunity to reinforce the importance of learning. It provides parents/guardians with a means of becoming involved in the student's learning. Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping good attitudes and habits in relation to your son's/daughter's homework.

We ask that as parents/guardians you spend time monitoring your daughter's/son's journal and ensuring that homework is being recorded and then completed – according to the needs of the student. We ask that you encourage your daughter/son to persevere with difficult assignments; valuable learning comes from attempting as well as completing work.

Experience has shown that parental involvement with homework is invaluable for the student. Encouraging a positive attitude is most beneficial and parents can play a major role in this.

If for some reason the assigned homework is not done or completed a note in the journal from a parent/guardian explaining why is required.

Parents/guardians play an important supportive role in the area of homework and can aid the success of their son/daughter through the following:

- Reminding him/her to allow sufficient time to complete the homework assignments. Suggest that your son/daughter draws up a study timetable which should take account of all weekly activities such as sports, leisure, T.V. etc.;
- Providing a suitable, quiet place where the student can study, away from distractions such as television. The room should be warm, well lit and have a comfortable desk and chair;
- Curtailing the use of mobile phones during study;
- Checking periodically that the written homework submitted is neat and legible;
- Each student has a homework journal and parents/guardians can help by ensuring that each item listed is carefully completed;
- Homework journals should be signed by a parent/guardian at least once a week and any comment or message written by the teacher noted. Individual teachers may ask for journals to be signed each night. We would ask you to comply with this request. In the event of homework not done, a note of explanation should be sent to the teacher;
- Supervising appropriate to the age and needs of the student;
- Discussing your child's homework with him/her. Ask how he/she is getting on at school and even if the response is brief, as is often the case with teenagers, continue to maintain an interest;
- Attending parent-teacher meetings. Make an appointment to meet teachers if there are problems that need to be discussed;
- It is not recommended that students engage in part-time work during the school week. Weekend work should not be allowed to interfere unduly with school work;
- Fully supporting the school in any actions we take 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;
- Being aware of and supporting the school's policy on homework.

If a parent/guardian feels that their daughter/son is struggling with the amount of homework or degree of difficulty of same this should be communicated this to the class teacher.

18. Role of students

- To record and do the assigned homework to the best of their ability and to present it in a neat and tidy manner;
- Students are expected to have all books, copies and equipment necessary for each subject in class each day;
- Every student is expected to have a school journal to record the homework assigned in each class. Students should carefully record the instructions for their homework. They should ask questions, when necessary, to clarify the assignment. Before leaving school in the evening, they should check that they have all the books, copies and any other material needed for that night's homework;
- In the event of a student not doing homework without a credible excuse, the teacher may impose sanctions and/or communicate with parents/guardians through the journal;

- Students should carefully plan for the completion of long-term projects;
- If a student is absent from class, he/she should find out what work was missed and what homework was given;
- Those involved in extracurricular activities must also complete their homework. For this purpose it is worthwhile having a contact number of another student who was present in class;
- Students should expect to receive homework in most subject areas;
- Homework, both written and oral, is considered of equal importance;
- Homework is regarded as an extension of class work and as a preparation for the next day's work;
- In order to achieve, students must be prepared to spend time studying and revising as well as doing their homework;
- It is very important that all homework should be attempted as effort is extremely important;
- When difficulty is encountered, a student should refer to her/his textbook or examples given in class. It is required that there would be some evidence of effort made.

When doing homework students should:

- Find a quiet place where possible and establish a routine;
- Try to avoid all obvious distractions – TV, music, phone calls, text messages, social media etc.
- When possible, homework should be completed early in the evening rather than late at night;
- Try to complete homework on the night it is given, even though it may not be required for the next day;
- Design your own personal timetable for homework – half hour blocks are recommended followed by a short break. Allocate time for study and revision also;
- Take notes when studying, highlight key areas, headings etc. These will be used later for revision;
- Use your textbook or notes given in class to help you answer written questions;
- Where the homework involves solving problems, study the examples given in class first, before attempting the problems;
- When you have to learn off material such as vocabulary, grammar, definitions, diagrams or formulae, test yourself regularly and keep testing until you know it;
- Make sure all written work is neat and tidy;

- When homework is completed, timetable and schoolbag should be checked to ensure that all books, copies, PE gear, art materials etc. are ready for the next day.

19. Sanctions

Homework assignments and deadlines are set by subject teachers and must be adhered to. Lack of co-operation by students may be dealt with in one or more of the following ways

- A verbal reprimand and note in student journal;
- A penalty exercise;
- Referral to the Year Head;
- If homework is not presented a teacher may send a note to the parent/guardian via the student journal;
- Where a student persists in not doing homework a letter may be sent to the parent/ guardian;
- Detention may be given to students who persist in not doing homework;
- Parents and tutor checks diary once a week;
- Problems regarding homework are to be written into comment section of diary and noted in the school discipline system;
- Year Head will interview students and may contact parents/guardians when the homework becomes a discipline issue;
- Teachers may use appropriate strategies to deal with issues relating to homework including detention.