



St Mary's Knockbeg College Homework Policy

Scope of Policy: This policy shall apply to the whole school.

Definition of "Homework"

The term '*Homework*' should not be narrowly interpreted, as the definition includes more than just written exercises or learning lists of verbs, making summaries etc. It also involves regular revision work and exam preparation. A wide variety of homework assignments are set by teachers and could include:

- Projects
- Research
- Report writing
- Essay writing
- Vocabulary
- Reading
- Drawing/painting
- Designing and making models
- Experiments
- Visits to Public Library
- Using the Internet for research
- Listening to radio programmes or watching television programmes recommended by the teacher.

Rationale for homework

1. Homework provides students with an opportunity to reinforce material already covered in class.
2. It provides a foundation for future learning.

3. It is essential for students to commit certain facts to memory e.g. mathematical formulae, historical accounts, poems etc. and it is important that these should be revised regularly as directed by the teacher.
4. It is a useful mental discipline as it allows students to test their powers of recall and prepares the student for success in examinations.

Goal of Homework Policy

1. To assess the student's comprehension of the material covered in the classroom.
2. To ascertain the student's strengths and weakness.
3. To help students with revision of material previously covered in class.
4. To promote interaction between the students, teachers and parents.

Time Allocation for Homework

The amount of time needed for students to complete homework assignments varies from student to student and from academic year to year. The following are broad guidelines as to how much time Knockbeg College recommends the student spend as a minimum:

First year:	1.5 hours per night
Second year:	2.5 hours per night
Third year:	3.0 hours per night
Transition year:	Varies depending on project work and activities
Fifth year:	3.5 hours per night
Sixth year:	4.0 hours per night.

Students who are preparing for state examinations will probably require additional study time as exam time approaches. Study should also be a routine part of weekend activity for all students.

Students will be at a serious disadvantage if they allow part-time work interfere with school and exam preparation and during state exam years it is best not to engage in any form of part-time work at all.

Special Needs

In setting homework for students with special needs, teachers are encouraged to balance the rights 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 teachers and “The Base” teacher to ensure class tasks are manageable, and individual skill practice can be incorporated without overloading the students.

Exceptionally able Students

Teachers should take cognisance of the needs of this cohort when setting homework to ensure that they are appropriately challenged. Particular care should be taken when correcting these tasks to provide feedback in a manner which matches their individual needs and talents.

Guidelines for Teachers

1. Teachers in the school are expected to set regular homework on topics covered in class.
2. Teachers should explain homework assignments clearly and allocate time to allow students to record homework in their journals.
3. Teachers are expected to check homework after each assignment and maintain appropriate records.
4. Homework should not be pitched beyond the ability of students and it should be of value to students.
5. Teachers should ensure that no single subject should take up a disproportionate amount of students’ time to the detriment of other subjects.
6. Adequate time should be given to students to complete major assignments such as essays etc.
7. Homework during holiday periods, mid-term breaks etc. may be given at the teacher’s discretion. Exam classes may benefit from homework at these times.
8. Teachers should avail of every opportunity to encourage parents to become actively involved in their children’s homework.
9. Students should be made aware that it is their responsibility to get details of homework assignments from classmates or their teacher if they are absent from class/school for any reason.
10. The amount of homework given to students should be curtailed or deadlines extended when students are involved in school related activities such as attending a play, debate, etc.

11. Teachers may take account of a student's good homework record towards the allocation of test result marks at times across the school year.

Parents' Role in Homework

Parents can aid the success of their student through the following:

1. Reminding him to allow sufficient time to complete the homework assignments.
2. Helping with drawing up a study timetable which should take account of all weekly activities such as sports, leisure, T.V. etc.
3. 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. All state exam students should be encouraged to avail of the St Mary's Knockbeg College Supervised Study Programme.
4. Checking periodically that the written homework submitted is neat and legible.
5. Each student has a special homework journal. Parents can help by ensuring that each item listed is carefully completed.
6. Homework journals should be signed by a parent 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 in relation to their subject or comments made. 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.
7. Ensure that regular discussions about homework take place.
8. Attend parent-teacher meetings. Make an appointment through the College office, to meet teachers if there are problems that need to be discussed.
9. Fully supporting the College 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.

Guidelines for Students

1. Teachers in Knockbeg College place great emphasis on setting purposeful well planned homework which is designed to assist each student in reaching his 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 in the College must record all homework in his Homework Journal as outlined by 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 should inform you of the due time and date for submitting homework. If in doubt, ask your teacher to clarify this.
7. Your Homework Journal must be signed by one of your parents/guardians each week and presented to your Class teacher for inspection on request.
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 applies also to students who miss classes due to sporting or other extra-curricular activities.
9. Copying homework from another student 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. Homework must be completed. In the event of homework not being submitted, teachers will require a letter of explanation from parents/guardians.
11. Parents will be notified if a student's performance at homework does not meet the school's expectations.

Homework 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:

1. Verbal reprimand, comment on e-portal or note to parents in student journal.
2. Standard letter to parents.
3. An individual teacher may detain the student during break/lunchtime until the work is completed.
4. Discussion with parents by phone / by letter / by visit to school.
5. Use of the College's detention system for persistent failure to do / attempt homework.
6. Refusal of progression to the following year. Students may be kept back.

Ratified by the Board of Management

Chairperson Board of Management

Date: Feb 2015

Review Date - May 2016