

Homework Policy

Rationale:

This policy encourages a sense of responsibility for homework amongst all the school partners of Columba College. Teachers in Columba College regard the setting and correction of homework as an important part of our overall aim to achieve the highest possible level of learning among our students. However the final responsibility for satisfactory completion and presentation of homework rests with the learner.

Why Homework?

- Homework enhances academic achievement by consolidating the work done in class
- It encourages students to reach their full potential with regards to their academic abilities.
- Regular homework is a valuable aspect of the learning process and contributes to the development of sound and effective study skills.
- Homework promotes independent, self-directed learning and creativity.
- Homework fosters in students positive values such as self discipline, responsibility for and an interest in learning – which will benefit them throughout their lives.
- Homework enables students to develop a capacity to organise their own work.
- Homework will assist in teachers' on-going assessment of pupils' work.

To this end, parents are encouraged to take an interest in and to share responsibility for their own child's work and progress. This policy encourages the active involvement and participation of pupil, teacher, and parent in order to improve learning and teaching in the school.

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What is homework?

Homework takes different forms and these include:

- Short written answers
- Revision / Learning /Aural Work/ Oral work
- Short exercises aimed at practising new skills/applying new concepts

- Drawing diagrams or maps
- Essays
- Project work that may extend over a few weeks
- Research for projects and writing up of project briefs
- Researching/Gathering materials, ideas for project work and/or other subjects
- Reading

Appropriate Homework Practice:

The following should assist in the implementation of our homework policy:

- Students should record each item of homework in their journal and should use the journal in conjunction with their timetable to plan homework properly.
- Homework must be completed to the satisfaction of the teacher, unless there is a good explanation in writing from parents / guardians i.e. note in school journal.
- Written exercises might not be given every night in every subject, but this does not mean that oral homework, reading, revision etc., can be ignored.
- Homework journals should be inspected and signed every week by a parent/guardian.
- Journals may be inspected at the discretion of the teacher.
- Students should tick off homework completed in their journal.
- Homework set will be purposeful and meaningful to the work of the class or to some future work.
- Extended exercises may form part of an on-going assessment of each student.
- Students must present homework on the date specified by the teacher.
- Students absent due to school related activities (e.g. matches etc.) must ensure that homework set in their absence is completed.
- A student absent for a period of time is expected to make every effort to complete work missed while absent.
- A student absent for an extended period should contact a classmate or the school for a record of homework set during this period.

Time Spent at Homework

As a general guideline it is recommended that the following amount of time be spent on

homework per night. The ability of each student is an important consideration

- 1st year students at least 1.5 hours
- 2nd years should spend at least 2 hours
- 3rd years should spend 2.5 hours, building up to 3.5 hours approaching exam time, on homework/revision.

Senior cycle students should aim to incorporate homework and exam revision into their study.

- 5th years should spend 2.5 - 3 hours
- 6th years should spend a minimum of 3 hours

Non-Completion of Homework

Teachers will follow these procedures for non-completion of homework;

- Verbal reprimand
- Written comment in journal
- Relevant extra homework
- Telephone call / letter to parent/guardian
- Lunch detention
- Persistent failure to do / attempt homework may incur incident sheet or Friday after school detention.

The student must adhere to the homework procedures presented by teachers at the beginning of the school year. If the student persistently fails to complete or present the homework, the student is then referred to the Principal / Deputy Principal.

Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone has a role to play in developing and implementing the homework policy. As such it should be viewed as a collaborative approach on the part of four groups: students, parents / guardians, teachers, and school management.

Students

- The student is obliged to note homework appropriately in his journal.
- If a student is uncertain as to the nature of the task it is their responsibility to communicate

this to the teacher whereupon it will be clarified.

- Students should complete homework in a satisfactory fashion and present it on time to the teacher.
- It must be neat, tidy, and reflect the best efforts of the student.
- Copying homework is not permitted.
- The student is not entitled to present excuses on his own behalf for incomplete homework. He/She must ask a parent / guardian to write a note in their journal giving the reason for the lack of homework on the part of the student.
- A student who participates in extracurricular activities is expected to find out the homework either from the teacher or a fellow student.
- A student who is absent from school is expected to catch up on work completed in class, either by himself or by asking for assistance from the teacher.

Parents / Guardians

- It is important for parents / guardians to acknowledge their role in the student's homework efforts.
- Parents/Guardians should sign the journal each week.
- The parent /guardian can help the student get into a regular routine of doing homework by checking journals, on at least a weekly basis, to see if homework is being recorded regularly.
- An appropriate study environment and conditions should be made available to the student.
- A parent / guardian should sign notes written home by teachers and also use the school journal to write a note to the teacher giving the precise reason for incomplete homework on the part of the student.
- It is important that parents take an active role in their son's /daughter's education as well as realising accountability in their role. Attendance at parent/teacher meetings is essential.
- Parents should discourage students working in part-time jobs during school term.

Teachers

- It is important that teachers emphasise the importance of homework as an integral part of the school.
- It is important that teachers communicate homework clearly to the class as well as telling students to note homework in their journals.
- It is advisable that homework be noted on the board and adequate time given to take it down in order to avoid confusion.
- Homework should be given on a regular basis as well as being corrected regularly.

- Regular feedback, either verbal or by means of written comments and /or grades, should be given regarding the homework task.
- Homework tasks should be appropriate to the level of the class.
- Where homework has not been satisfactorily attempted the teacher is entitled to give an appropriate sanction.

Management

- It is also the role of management to emphasise the importance of homework as an integral part of the school.
- Management should clarify the importance of homework by communicating it to the student body as a whole, by speaking to class individually, and by speaking with the individual students who are failing to complete homework on a regular basis.
- Along with the subject teacher, class teachers and school management can also stress the importance of homework to the students at the beginning of the year, and also throughout the year

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

