

**DRAFT**  
**Scoil Dara Homework Policy**

**Introduction**

**Rationale for Homework Policy**

Keeping students interested in school and motivating them to succeed are challenges that present themselves year after year in all schools. This policy has been developed to enable teachers to implement a consistent, whole-school approach and set of expectations for students regarding homework – expectations that are understood by students and parents and accepted as reasonable by them. In line with our mission statement it is our policy to promote a culture of supporting, affirming and valuing every endeavour.

**Purpose of Homework**

- ❑ It allows students the opportunity to reinforce and expand on the learning done during class time
- ❑ It helps to build self-discipline, good work habits, and help develop positive attitudes toward independent study and to develop habits of enquiry and investigation
- ❑ It helps to inform parents about their child's learning experiences and allows them to support and supervise their children's academic endeavours and their sense of responsibility

Homework may include written work, reading and learned (oral) work.

**Mission Statement**

Scoil Dara promotes the development of a community of faith inspired by Gospel values. The community of the school works in a holistic manner to ensure that dependence is gradually replaced by responsibility for self, society and the world. The dignity of each student, staff member and parent is honoured and reflected in school policies and structures. While educational excellence is promoted, it is the needs of the learner that direct the development of the school. We engage with alternative approaches to education especially for those who are most disadvantaged. The school promotes a spirit of service and care.

**Policy Statement**

Scoil Dara's Homework Policy is underpinned by

- i. Our School Ethos and Mission Statement
- ii. Research Evidence which suggests that homework is most effective when
  - ❑ homework tasks are structured and their purpose explained to pupils
  - ❑ there is consistent practice across the school
  - ❑ homework is given regularly so that everyone knows what to expect each week
  - ❑ pupils and parents/guardians are clear about what they need to do
  - ❑ there are high expectations
  - ❑ pupils receive clear feedback
  - ❑ homework policies are monitored and evaluated.
  - ❑
- iii. After school study facilities provided by the school

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Learning Support Policy

**Scope**

This is a whole-school policy and is expected to impact on students, parents and teachers at all levels throughout the school.

## **Aims & Objectives of the Policy**

- ❑ To explain the purpose of homework to students and parents
- ❑ To develop good study skills
- ❑ To communicate clear expectations about homework to students, teachers and parents
  - To set clear standards for students in recording and completing homework and in meeting deadlines
  - To set general guidelines for teachers re assigning and evaluating homework, giving feedback and recording outcomes
  - To specify how parents shall be informed about students homework progress and how they may communicate with teachers about homework; to encourage parents to support and supervise their children's homework
- ❑ To set out how homework will be monitored and coordinated
- ❑ To put in place a system of rewards for students who achieve targets and sanctions for students who fail to meet the standards set out in this policy

## **Principles Underpinning the Policy**

Scoil Dara accepts the principles that

- teachers and parents can influence student motivation
- homework can play a significant role in student motivation
- good homework is a foundation of teaching and learning
- homework reinforces the learning that takes place in the classroom
- homework instils in students a spirit of self reliance, independence, co-operation and responsibility

## **Responsibility of the School Community Members to the Policy**

### **Students**

Students are required to make an honest effort to complete all homework fully and to the best of their ability and to submit all assignments on time.

Students will bring their Student Journal to every class and will keep it in good order. Students will record all homework in the journal, whether the homework is 'written' or 'learned'. If homework is not given students will record work done in class, for revision purposes.

If a student is absent from class they will find out what work was done and what homework was given and arrange to catch up.

If students are experiencing difficulties with homework they will ask for assistance.

Students are expected to participate in training/support in how to do homework when this is provided.

Students will participate in a sanction and reward scheme to encourage completion of homework.

Junior cycle students will ensure that their journal is signed by their parent/guardian weekly. In the case of senior students this practice is encouraged.

### **Parents**

Communication between parent and teacher regarding homework will be conducted through the Student Journal. Parents of Junior Cycle students will be required to sign the Journal on a specified day each week – they will sign that they have checked the Journal for the previous week and read any comments from teachers. Teachers may also require that a parent sign a comment on the day it is written by the teacher.

Parents will be informed where a student consistently fails to carry out homework assignments (written or learned) or where the work is consistently not completed to the best of the student's ability. In such cases, the procedures for monitoring the academic progress of students will be brought into play.

Where a student is unable to complete an assignment the parents will be required to submit a note, explaining the difficulty encountered and describing the effort made by the student to complete the assignment on time.

When homework is consistently not completed on time and to the best of a student's ability the parents may be requested to visit the school to discuss the issue.

Parents will receive a written Report three times each year (normally at Christmas time, in March and after the Summer examinations). These Reports may also include a comment on homework and application to study, but this will not be the first time a parent will be made aware of difficulties.

There will be a Parent-Teacher meeting each year for each year-group. The school has a very strong tradition of high attendance by parents at Parent-Teacher meetings and parents are strongly encouraged to avail of the opportunity to meet teachers and to discuss progress with them. Where a concern arises regarding homework, parents may arrange to meet individual teachers by appointment; this will normally be arranged through the Year Head.

Where a student or a parent considers that the homework schedule of their child is imbalanced e.g. too much on some nights and too little on others they should contact the Year Head to discuss their concerns.

## **Teachers**

### **i. Subject Teachers**

Homework will be given for each class period and will be fully explained.

Teachers will ensure that the homework assigned is geared to suit the abilities of students in class and that the amount given can be completed in a reasonable amount of time

Teachers will allow time in each class for the assignment and recording of homework. Teachers will ask students to record homework assignments in their Student Journals and to record the date on which the homework falls due. Homework assignments will be relevant to the work being undertaken in class or to revision work and will be purposeful and meaningful.

Teachers will check and correct homework that is handed in on time. Where homework is corrected in class teachers will do random spot checks to ensure that students have completed the assignment. Where homework was assigned to be learned (unwritten homework) teachers will do random testing in class to ensure the work was done.

Teachers will endeavour to return student copies in a reasonable amount of time. Teachers will give appropriate feedback to students on homework assignments, as soon as possible afterwards. Feedback will be factual, accurate and fair – any comment will refer to the quality of the work or its timely submission, not to the character of the student.

In some cases, teachers may give less written homework and place a greater emphasis on learned homework. In such cases, teachers may give more regular class-based assessment tests to measure progress. Feedback will be recorded on such tests and the tests returned to the students, who will be encouraged to share such feedback with their parents. Teachers will endeavour to give positive feedback where possible. Where teachers have given negative feedback this fact will be noted by the teacher in the Student Journal and parents will be asked to sign the Journal to indicate they have read the teacher's comment(s).

Teachers will keep a record of homework assignments (both written and learned), of homework completed by each student, of tardiness on the part of students in submitting homework and, where applicable, of grades assigned for homework.

A student's homework and coursework is an important aspect of a student's learning and development. Teachers will reflect the importance of student's homework and coursework by the carefully minding of student copies and the prompt return of the copies after inspection

Where homework is consistently not completed on time and to the best of a student's ability parents will be notified by the subject teacher through the Student Journal. The subject teacher may also apply a sanction as set out below.

Each subject teacher will emphasise to their classes suitable study techniques for their subject and will practice at least one such technique during one class period with each class during “Learning Support Week”.

**ii. Class Tutors**

Class Tutors will check and sign all homework diaries weekly. They will support and encourage all students to produce quality work

Class Tutors will devote time each year to exploring and reinforcing the homework policy with students in their class group. Class Tutors will implement the agreed rewards and sanctions scheme.

**iii. Guidance Counsellors**

Guidance counsellors will assist students who have particular difficulties draw up a study plan. They will also provide support and guidance to students/teachers/parents/ guardians regarding homework if such support is requested.

**iv. Learning Support Team**

The Learning Support Team will assist student with special educational needs draw up a study plan. They will also provide support and guidance to students with special needs and also to their teachers/parents/guardians regarding homework if such support is requested.

**v. Year Heads**

The Year Head is responsible for overseeing the welfare and progress of pupils in the year-group and for keeping parents and the school authorities informed. The Year Head, in collaboration with tutors and all other teachers in the school promotes excellence in attendance and academic performance.

Each Year Head will use their initiative in this regard. The Year Head will remind students regularly about the school’s expectations regarding homework and in particular about the importance of the Student Journal in recording homework and in monitoring student progress.

When homework is consistently not completed on time and to the best of a student’s ability the student may be referred to the Year Head. The Year Head may counsel the student and/or may ask the parents to visit the school to discuss the issue

The benefits of homework and the school’s expectations about homework will be regular themes at Year Group and Class Group Assemblies

**Subject Departments**

Each Subject Department will devise guidelines on homework and assessment for their subject area – these guidelines will be published as an Appendix to this policy and will be included on the school’s website. (See Appendix One)

**Principal**

The Principal will arrange that

- the school policy on homework will be communicated to parents of students in Scoil Dara and will be in the Student Journal.
- the benefits of homework and the school’s expectations concerning homework will be discussed at the special meetings for parents of First Years in October/November of each year and will be referred to in School Newsletters and the school web-site
- the school will organise a Study Skills session each year for students from second year to sixth year.
- The school will arrange to have a Learning Support Week at least twice a year eg in November and April in which each teacher will emphasise to their classes suitable study techniques for their subject and will practice at least one such technique during one class period with each class that week.

## **Board of Management**

The Board of Management will ensure that:

- A review of the Code is carried out regularly
- School management and teachers are fully supported and resourced in implementing the Homework Policy

## **Sanctions**

Sanctions may include:

- A reprimand – verbal or written
- Extra, meaningful work
- Break or lunchtime detention to support students in completion of assigned homework

## **Incentives/Rewards**

Rewards may include:

- Note of Commendation in Student Journal
- Personalised Letter of Commendation
- Certificate of Commendation for consistent, honest effort at homework in some/all subjects
- Informal praise

## **Implementation and Compliance**

All members of the school's teaching staff are responsible for the implementation of this Homework Policy.

The full co-operation of parents/guardians is expected

Each student is expected to do his/her best with regard to homework

## **Success Criteria**

- Students consistently recording homework assigned and purposefully undertaking the homework
- Parental satisfaction as established by survey
- Teacher satisfaction at student and parental engagement and at staff general engagement
- Students satisfied with quantity, quality and manner in which homework is assigned

## **Monitoring, Review and Evaluation**

The school is committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this Policy. The Board of Management will review the implementation of the policy once annually. The following factors will be considered as part of the review:

- (a) Student feedback
- (b) Teacher review and feedback
- (c) Parental feedback

A summary report on the above feedback will be presented to the Board by the School Development Planning Co-ordinator to help with this review

This policy will be reviewed at least every 5 years.

## **Appendix One**

### **SUBJECT DEPARTMENT HOMEWORK PROCEDURES:**

#### **Accounting/Business Studies/Economics**

The amount of homework given will be specified by the subject teacher. The amount given will depend on the allocation of class periods and where they are placed on the timetable. A balance will be maintained between written and oral work. Homework will be related to the class work at that time and will be assigned before the end of the class when students have a chance to note it in their journals. Special consideration will always be given to students with special needs. At the start of class copies are checked to ensure that homework has been attempted. Failure to produce homework results in a note in student's journal to their parents which must be signed. Homework is then corrected orally by asking students to read aloud their answers. Any difficulties are gone through on the board.

#### **Art**

Draft being prepared

#### **C.S.P.E.**

Draft being prepared

#### **English**

Draft being prepared

#### **French**

Draft being prepared

#### **Gaeilge**

#### **Módhanna d'Obair Bhaile:**

Bíonn an obair bhaile i gcónaí bunaithe ar obair an ranga ach amháin nuair a bhíonn dul siar ar siúl do scrúdú. Ní gá níos mó ná 15 nóiméad d'obair bhéil a thabhairt do lucht na chéad bhliana. Is fearr rud mar aiste nó giota leanúnach a thabhairt go minic. Is fearr meascán d'obair fhoghlamtha agus scríobtha a thabhairt. Má tharlaíonn sé nach bhfuil aon obair scríofa le tabhairt ba cheart don dalta dul siar ar ábhar an ranga agus é a fhoghlaim.

Déantar iarrachtaí na daltaí a spreagadh dul ag éisteacht agus ag breathnú ar chláir Gaeilge ar an teilifís agus/nó ar an raidió mar obair bhaile. Déantar chuile iarracht i mbliana obair bhaile éisteachta a thabhairt do lucht na chéad bhliana toisc go dtagann dlúthdhiosca lena gcuid téacsleabhar anois. Déantar an-iarracht na cóipleabhair a bhailiú chomh rialta agus is féidir agus grád a thabhairt – go háirithe do na ranganna sinsearacha.

Coinníonn chuile mhúinteoir tuairisc don obair bhaile a thugtar ina d(h)ialann.

## **Geography**

Homework is always based on work carried out during class time, with the exception of extra revision for exams etc. We feel it is best to give a mix of written and learning work to students. Even if no written homework is given, students are always required to revise work covered in class.

Students are strongly advised, where possible to watch TV programmes of geographical interest, such as National Geographic. Students are also encouraged to use internet facilities, where possible.

Efforts are made to collect copies for correction, grading or inspection.

All Junior cycle students are given homework from their textbook or workbook, and also from exam papers in the case of 3<sup>rd</sup> year students.

All Senior cycle students are given homework from their textbook or workbook, and also from exam papers in the case of 6<sup>th</sup> year students.

All homework given is recorded in the teacher's own diary for reference.

## **German**

Draft being prepared

## **History**

1. Written work based on the days work to be assigned regularly and to be corrected on the following day.
2. Write the homework on the board.

### **Suggested experiment**

Write the homework at the beginning of the class.

Allow time for class to take it down.

Refer to it during the class.

Correct it the next day.

Regular project work to be assigned with specific guidelines and date lines for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years.

In addition to the homework assignments, exam questions will be set and corrected for 3<sup>rd</sup> years as part of their revision.

### **Length of homework**

1<sup>st</sup> Year - 15mins

2<sup>nd</sup> Year - 20mins

3<sup>rd</sup> Year 20 – 25mins

5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Year – weekly written assignments

## **Home Economics**

Draft being prepared

## **Information Technology**

- Homework is given where it is deemed to supplement and develop what has been covered in lesson.
- It is not a requirement for every lesson.

- Where given pupils are expected to document what is required in their homework journal and complete same for the next lesson.
- Not all tasks will be written e.g. research on a website etc.
- Pupils will not be required to have a computer or internet access at home. In the absence of the above at home provision will be made for pupils to use school facilities.
- Pupils must produce a note from parents if homework (when given) is not done.
- Pupils are reminded that they have one full week to complete the homework. In normal circumstances this is sufficient time to inform the teacher of difficulties should they arise. Therefore homework not submitted will result in a detention.

### **L.C.V.P.**

Students are required to have a copy for homework and written homework is given alongside reviewing and revising the theory covered in class.

Students are required to complete written questions from textbook, exam papers and mock papers

Students are instructed to plan, draft, complete and re-correct a variety of portfolio items

Students are required to prepare Case Studies for in class questions and for end of term / Mock exams

### **Mathematics**

Draft being prepared

### **Music**

Draft being prepared

### **Religious Education**

Draft being prepared

### **Science**

Student's homework is up to the decision of the teacher and the topic being taught. Homework may not always be written but is always given.

The following is a list of types of homework that can be given by teachers:

- Learning
- Questions
- Experiment write-up
- Drawing diagrams
- Revision questions
- Making posters or models
- Research of a topic

### **T4 Subjects**

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