

# St Patrick's Classical School



## Homework Policy



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## Rationale

Homework is a valuable aspect of the learning process. It fosters a sense of responsibility, reinforces class work and promotes the life-long skills of independent learning and creativity. What is more, as well as providing a valuable tool for Teachers to monitor on a continuous and regular basis the progress of a Student, homework affords opportunities for Parents/Guardians to share responsibility for their child's learning. This policy set out the approach of St. Patrick's in relation to homework as it pertains to Students, Parents/Guardians and Teachers.

## School's Strategy

St. Patrick's Classical School employs a number of strategies in order to maximize the positive effects of homework while negating the possibilities of Students becoming stressed and over-worked. These strategies are as follows:

### **General**

- Homework usually takes the form of written work but it may also involve non-written studying and revision.
- Completed homework must be neat, tidy, and reflect the best efforts of the student.
- Copying homework is not permitted.
- Students generally have homework in one form or another every night so Students must take responsibility for ensuring that all the books/copies necessary to fulfil their homework requirements are brought home with them at the end of the school day.
- If a Student is uncertain as to the nature of the task it is her/his responsibility to communicate this to the teacher whereupon it will be clarified. To help prevent any confusion Teachers are encouraged to write homework on the board well in advance of the end of class.
- Homework, given by each Subject Teacher, whether written or otherwise must be recorded by the student in his Student Journal. Not only will this remind the Student as to their exact homework, it provides Parents/Guardians the opportunity to monitor the work their child is supposed to have completed.
- All homework assignments must be completed or at least attempted. Where they are not, an explanatory note from a Parent/Guardian must be included in the Student Journal and presented to the Subject Teacher prior to the commencement of the class.
- Homework should be completed at home. Under no circumstances should homework be completed on the school premises except for specifically designated times (study classes, evening study, etc) or when teachers give a student or students express permission to do so. Cases of the latter might arise in the event of a free-class where a student has completed the work left or in very rare cases where



work has not been left.

- Students who miss all or part of a class due to extra-curricular events e.g. sport, tours etc. must make arrangements to find out what homework assignments they missed and have that homework completed for the next class in that subject.
- Homework requirements vary from subject to subject and from Year grouping to Year grouping but the following times may be a useful guideline to students and parents.

First Year	1-1 ½ hours
Second Year	1-1½ - 2 hours
Third Year	2-2 ½ hours increasing as mock and state exams approach
Transition Year	Will vary depending on project work
Fifth Year	2 ½ hours
Sixth Year	3 hours, increasing as mock and state exams approach

- Teachers will endeavour to ensure that they give a balanced level of homework, particularly going into Senior Cycle so as to not to over-burden students or adversely affect students from completing written and non-written homework for other subjects.
- It is important that Teachers emphasise the importance of homework and give appropriate levels of homework on a regular basis. Appropriate levels should take into account the levels of homework being given by other teachers as well as the level of the class.
- In monitoring and correcting of homework, Teachers should reinforce the importance of improving literacy and numeracy skills.
- Where homework has not been satisfactorily attempted the teacher should communicate thus by writing a note home to parents in the Student Journal. Moreover, it is advisable that teachers record in their own records instances when homework tasks are not completed. The Teacher is entitled to give an appropriate sanction if a student fails to do homework.
- The active support of Parents/Guardians is vital in the establishment of positive homework habits. To this end we suggest Parents/Guardians help Students to create a study environment and conditions at home that is free from distractions.
- It is recommended that both Class Tutors and Parents/Guardians stamp or sign the Student Journal once a week. It is further suggested that regular observance of the “Homework Incomplete” Section as the back of the journal beside the “Positive Behaviour” section is made.
- School Management also play an important role in homework and will continue to clarify the importance of homework by regularly communicating this to Parents, the Student body and to Teaching Staff.

### **Sanctions**

- In the event of no written explanation being offered, students who fail to present homework in class or who fail to make an acceptable effort at an assigned exercise, students may face sanctions from the Subject Teacher involved.
- The most common sanction employed in St. Patrick’s is a note in the back of the School Journal in the



“Homework Incomplete” section. Three of these notes will result in an automatic detention.

- Students who consistently fail to present homework or to make an acceptable effort will be reported to the Class Tutor and/or the Year Head who will determine the level of sanctions to be imposed.
- Students who continually refuse to do homework may face sanctions up to and including suspension.

### **Evaluation of the Policy**

The Policy will be subject to review during 2016 by school management. The Policy will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Feedback from Teachers, Student Council and Parents Council regarding the effectiveness of the policy.
- Improved recording and monitoring of homework as evidenced in the student journals.
- Increased student responsibility for homework completion as evidenced by a lessening of incidents of “Homework Incomplete” offences.
- Increased involvement of parents with regard to homework as evidenced by weekly signing of Student Journals by Parents/Guardians.