

Homework Policy



Coláiste Bríde, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

Ratified by the Board of Management

**Signed: _____
Chairperson,
Board of Management**

Review Date: 30th June, 2020

**Signed: _____
Secretary,
Board of Management**

1. School Mission Statement

“We are working to promote a secure and caring environment, Where Respect, Responsibility and Christian commitment grow, Drawing forth the positive of each individual”

Coláiste Bríde is a Catholic School founded by the Mercy Order under the trusteeship of CEIST. It has a long tradition of academic excellence and is committed to the development of the whole student. It offers a curriculum designed to meet fully the needs of the student. The school wishes to cater for the academic, spiritual, moral, aesthetic, interpersonal and physical needs of the student. The characteristics of the school are the pursuit of tolerance, compassion and a sense of justice and equality for all. We aim to develop in each student, confidence, self-respect, and respect for others. The school and its staff value its partnership with parents in meeting the personal and educational requirements of students and staff alike. The core values of CEIST are: Promoting Spiritual and Human Development We believe a knowledge of and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ gives meaning and purpose to our lives. Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning We are committed to excellence and to continually improving the quality of teaching and learning. Showing Respect for Every Person We respect the unique and intrinsic value of every person. Creating Community Our schools are faith communities of welcome and hospitality where Gospel values are lived and where there is special care for those most in need. Being Just and Responsible We seek to act justly and responsibly in all our relationships.

The core values of CEIST are :

Promoting Spiritual and Human Development

We believe a knowledge of and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ gives meaning and purpose to our lives.

Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning

We are committed to excellence and to continually improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Showing Respect for Every Person

We respect the unique and intrinsic value of every person.

Creating Community

Our schools are faith communities of welcome and hospitality where Gospel values are lived and where there is special care for those most in need.

Being Just and Responsible

We seek to act justly and responsibly in all our relationships

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 their learning, their property, to develop their 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. It supports home-school partnership. This policy is in line with the School's Mission statement.

4. Aim of the Policy

To develop a student's positive attitude to study and homework that builds upon a positive attitude to school, education, and life-long learning.

To value the role parents and teaching staff play in promoting effective study skills and homework routines for the student.

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:

Support classroom learning by reviewing and practicing what has been learned in class during the day;

- Prepare for the next day's class;
- Explore subjects in greater depth than is allowed by class time alone;
- Practise new skills and concepts and enable students to become more competent in their use;
- Facilitate students' creativity and independent learning, for example enabling the completion of projects, the use of local library for research, the use of the internet;
- Encourage students to take responsibility for their learning and foster a spirit of self-discipline and self-reliance in students;
- Develop positive study habits and skills;
- Enable life-long learning;

- Develop individual potential and enhance self-esteem; • Promote a spirit of home-school partnership.

6. Goal of Homework Policy

- To encourage good and consistent practice throughout the school without overly impinging on individual approaches, needs and creativities of teacher and student.
- To develop the necessary and important skills required for examinations and maximise student performance.
- To reduce student stress.
- To develop study skills, self-discipline, motivation needed to study effectively on their own.
- To be thoroughly familiar with the course content of various subjects.
- To give students the opportunity to practice and revise work done in class.
- To foster good study and research practices among students.
- To encourage teachers to be consistent in assigning and checking homework.
- To establish a record of performance and provide teachers with feedback on the student's progress.
- To help teachers to monitor progress and to identify problem areas in their subject.
- To engage parents' involvement in students' study and homework.
- 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 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;
- Study facilities will be available in the school for some exam year groups;
- Homework is seen in a partnership context between student, teachers, and parents/guardians;
- To facilitate the homework process and to provide an information link for parents a homework journal is provided;
- In so far as is feasible teachers will ensure that there is an equitable/reasonable distribution of allocated homework within a reasonable timeframe;
- In the event of homework not being done, submitted, or not done to a satisfactory standard, appropriate disciplinary measures may be taken.

8. Homework and revision

Prescribed homework

The intrinsic value of homework activities is far more important than the precise amount of time devoted to them. As students differ in terms of their ability and speed of completion of work, it is impossible to be specific as to the amount of time to be spent daily on homework and revision by each individual student.

The following general guidelines are recommended for the maximum amount of assigned homework for each lesson:

1st years – 15 minutes per class

2nd years – 20 minutes per class

3rd years – 20 minutes per class

4th years – Varies depending on project work and activities

5th years – 30 minutes per class

6th years – 30 minutes per class

Longer assignments may be given over a number of days (e.g. If a 5th year student has 4 classes in a particular subject each week then a 4-hour project could be assigned to be completed over a period of two weeks). Students, parents and teachers should communicate to ensure students are adhering to appropriate time being spent on homework.

The school expects that all homework is completed and presented on time. It should be done to the best of the student's ability in a neat and tidy fashion.

Homework should be consistently applied across the school and within subject departments. Teachers will monitor time that students are spending on homework.

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.

Independent revision

Students' independent revision is essential to learning. Students are expected to do independent revision work alongside prescribed homework. Revision should be ongoing throughout the year and is especially important before exams.

9. 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.

10. Monitoring of the Policy

The effectiveness of this homework policy needs to be monitored and evaluated. It is envisaged that teachers and each subject department will monitor homework and 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 will to be reviewed regularly to assess its effectiveness in supporting student learning.

11. 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 Coláiste Bríde homework refers to tasks assigned to students by their teachers to be completed at home or at supervised study in school. Homework also includes ongoing and regular revision of course work and work to prepare for class.

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
Online assignments/quizzes	Uploading work to virtual platforms
Collaborative work	Digital presentations

12. Sanctions

Homework assignments, standards and deadlines set by subject teachers must be adhered to the best of the students' ability. Sanctions for not doing homework will be applied consistently and fairly across the school and subject departments with due regard for students' wellbeing and circumstance.

Lack of co-operation by students may be dealt with in one or more of the following ways:

- A verbal reprimand;
- Reassigned work;

Where a student persists in not doing homework:

- A VSWare behaviour comment may be given:*
- The parent/ guardian may be contacted:
- Referral to the Year Head: When repeated infractions of homework occur the Year Head may talk to a student, contact parents/guardians and/or apply further sanctions.

**Parents/guardians are asked to monitor behaviour comments on VSWare*

Appendix 1

Role of students:

- To complete 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 VSware;
- 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.
- 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;
- 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.
- To engage with MS Teams, Notebook and class virtual learning platforms as instructed by the teacher.
- **Students are encouraged to respectfully communicate with their teacher if they have experienced/are experiencing difficulty with homework in that subject.**

When doing homework, it is recommended that students would:

- Find a quiet place where possible and establish a routine;
- Try to avoid all obvious distractions – TV, radio, phone calls, text messages, iPads, tablets, 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 must 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.

Appendix 2

The role of teachers:

Purpose

1. To assign, correct and record homework as appropriate in accordance with this policy.
2. To support students learning and wellbeing.

Communication:

- Display homework on whiteboard and give students time to write homework in their journals.
- Post homework in Microsoft Teams or OneNote.
- Ensure that all instructions are clear to everyone in the class.
- Making parents aware of any problem in this area by sending a note home in the journal.
- Invite communication with students and monitor how students are managing homework.
- 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. Feedback should be provided in a way that facilitates ongoing improvement and learning, and acknowledges achievements made.
- Homework should be linked with and integrated into a programme of teaching and learning thereby forming part of the process of Assessment for Learning. It should be designed in such a way as to offer the students opportunities for self-assessment.
- In adopting the Assessment for Learning approach, the teacher gives feedback in three key areas in the student's learning cycle:
 - What homework the student has completed correctly
 - What weaknesses there are in the student's work
 - What the next step/s should be to improve performance or understanding
- This kind of feedback will be most helpful when the learning intentions and criteria for success are clearly understood by the students. The teacher's comments should relate to the task in hand, the learning intention, and the criteria for success
- Giving structured guidelines for revision.
- Support study skills programme which is included in the Wellbeing programme.
- Teachers examine each case of non-presentation of homework on an individual basis. In the first instance teachers should apply their own sanction and communicate via comment on VShare. If a teacher suspects that there is an underlying problem, they are advised to contact the relevant Year Head. It may be the case that a student is experiencing difficulty with the subject area or is experiencing other difficulties. If these difficulties persist the issue should be referred to the Student Support Team or S.E.N. Coordinator as appropriate.

Homework 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, that may include:

- Teacher correction
- **Whole-class feedback:** Class correction
- Class discussion
- **Peer assessment:** Students exchange work for correction
- Students write out answers in the form of a test
- **Self-assessment:** 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.

Appendix 3

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 daughter's homework.

We ask that as parents/guardians you spend time monitoring your daughter'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 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 around homework and can aid the success of their son/daughter through the following:

- Reminding her to allow sufficient time to complete the homework assignments. Suggest that your 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 her. Ask how 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 schoolwork;

- 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 is struggling with the amount of homework or degree of difficulty of same this should be communicated this to the class teacher.