

DRAFT MARCH 2008

HOMework POLICY **ST. PETER'S COLLEGE, WEXFORD**

Homework plays an important role in reinforcing the learner's understanding of classwork. It consists of:

- (i) Revising/learning work done recently in class
- (ii) Written/Oral/Aural assignments
- (iii) Recap on work done in earlier weeks, months or years

Therefore, there is always homework to be done

Rationale

- Homework reinforces and consolidates skills and understanding developed in school.
- It encourages the skills needed for students to study effectively on their own and promotes independent learning.
- It extends school learning, for example through additional reading.
- It directs research

From the beginning of first year each student is expected to establish a homework routine.

School Journal

The School Journal, which students receive at the beginning of each year, is a very important book. Students are required to have their journals in their possession while in school and while undertaking homework. All homework is to be recorded in the journal and should be checked and signed each week by the Parents/Guardians of the student. It acts as an important connection between the work done by students in school and at home.

Class Materials

Each student should have the required materials and books for each subject and should enter written homework into the appropriate copy. It is recommended that all such work should be dated. The work should be written clearly as this assists with revision.

Time Spent at Homework

All students differ in terms of their ability and the speed of completion of work. It is not possible to be prescriptive on the amount of time students should spend on homework. However, the following guidelines may be helpful:

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First Year	1-2 hours per school day
Second Year	1.5 – 2 hours per school day
Third Year	2-3 hours per school day
Transition Year	Varies, depending on project work and activities
Leaving Cert 1	Approximately 3 hours per school day
Leaving Cert 2	At least 3 hours per school day

More able students will complete tasks quickly and correctly and will appear to spend very little time on their homework. Other students and those with learning difficulties may put in large amounts of time and effort. Teachers and parents need to consider the varying abilities of students when setting homework.

It is expected that all written homework be completed on time, presented on time and done to the best of the student's ability. If a student has been absent the onus is on him to discover what work has been set and endeavour to complete it. If the student has been ill for some time, or has had a genuine excuse for not completing his homework (vouched for in writing by Parents/Guardians), concessions may be made in order to allow the student complete missed assignments by arrangement with the relevant subject teacher.

The Role of Parents/Guardians in Supporting Students

St. Peter's College expects parents/guardians co-operation in the implementation of this policy and encourages them to provide a suitable place in which students can do their homework.

It is the responsibility of Parents/Guardians to inform the subject teacher of any reasons why a student was unable to complete a homework assignment. This should be communicated through the school journal.

Parents/guardians are expected to check the school journal regularly and acknowledge notes from teachers, which may be in the journal.

It may be necessary for students to access the Internet as part of a homework assignment, and the school encourages parents/guardians to monitor their son's use of the Internet. St. Peter's College has an acceptable use policy in relation to Internet access in school which parents/guardians may find helpful.

While it is encouraged that parents/guardians assist with homework, it is in the student's best interests that the work presented is his own.

Parents/guardians should also ensure that any part-time jobs held by students do not interfere with the full and proper completion of homework.

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Study Skills

It is important that students have frequent and increasing opportunities to develop and consolidate their competence as independent learners. Each subject teacher provides tips and guidelines on the specific requirements within his/her subject area. The SPHE programme at junior cycle also helps guide students in this area.

St. Peter's College will endeavour to give students access to study skills programmes. To date this has been done quite effectively by inviting outside agencies to provide the service.

Special Educational Needs

In setting homework for students with special needs, teachers will endeavour to balance the right of students to share fully in the work of the class, including homework, with their individual learning needs.

Feedback for Students

Students look mainly to teachers for a response on the quality of their work. A variety of methods are used to monitor homework depending on the subject, the content and the age of the students. If a student feels or his parents/guardians feel, that he is under undue pressure from homework, the matter should be taken up with the relevant subject teacher.