

Homework and Study Policy

Mission Statement

Grange Community College seeks to enable students to fully develop their talents by creating a safe, healthy learning environment that nurtures self-discipline and encourages our pupils to share responsibility for their own learning.

1. Introduction

We regard the setting and correction of effective homework as an important part of our overall aim to achieve the highest possible level of learning among our students. Homework is an integral part of the learning process.

This policy encourages a sense of responsibility amongst all the partners of Grange Community College. The final responsibility for satisfactory completion of homework rests with the learner. It is a vital requirement that guides them in the recognition of their strengths and weaknesses in a particular subject.

We believe it is important because it helps:

- Reinforce and consolidate classroom learning
- Enhance academic achievement
- Encourage self-directed study
- Promote creativity
- Encourage active independent learning
- Support and encourage practical work/project work
- Promote the learning of important concepts
- Promote inclusion of all students as homework can be differentiated according to students' ability levels
- Students develop a sense of self achievement, self-discipline and good work habits which are important aspects of adult life
- Assist in teachers' ongoing assessment of students' work
- Provide feedback on students' progress while identifying individual students' strengths and needs
- Encourage parents to take an interest in and to share responsibility for their children's academic endeavours and progress

The policy also aims to ensure consistent approaches to the setting and reviewing of homework in Grange Community College.

2. Methodology

The following methods are encouraged in order to help our students learn how to do homework and study:

- Classwork and homework is differentiated in all classes according to students' ability levels.
- Homework completed to the best of the students' ability will be recognised in line with the code of positive behaviour.
- Teachers assign appropriate homework to students and give ample time to record and clarify homework in the class.
- Tasks set as homework may be assessed and the recorded grades used to monitor students' progress
- Subject teachers will provide guidance on study skills such as writing, research and organisation.
- Feedback is an important part of homework so students can learn and make progress in a given subject. Frequent feedback can be given orally or written by the teacher and through peer and self-assessment.

3. Management of Homework

In order to, manage the setting, correcting and recording of homework, the following procedures are recommended:

- Teachers are encouraged to assign homework as early as appropriate in the lesson.
- Homework is communicated clearly to students allowing them sufficient time during class to record their homework in their journals and seek clarifications from their subject teacher.
- Teachers may allow students time in class to start their homework in order to give students the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification regarding the homework.
- Teachers provide help and support to students when necessary. Teachers may provide success criteria outlining what a good piece of homework should look like.
- Teacher's feedback on homework is important for students to make progress. Teachers can use various strategies to correct homework given. Feedback can be given orally or written by the teacher and through peer and self-assessment.
- Teachers will be mindful of dates in the school calendar where students are engaged in Classroom Based Assessments (CBA's), Assessment tasks (AT's), Oral and practical exams. For example, allocating more time to complete homework if necessary to support student wellbeing.
- Teachers should carefully record homework set, corrected and returned using appropriate feedback.

- Subject teachers should carefully record students who have not completed their homework. In the case of a student who fails to complete homework, the procedure outlined in section 5 should be followed.

4. Roles

The following individuals are identified as having important roles in ensuring that homework is done on time and to an acceptable level:

The **Student** is responsible for noting his/her homework in his/her journal and having it completed to the necessary standard in the given time frame. The homework journal should be in the possession of the student at all times. Students should record all learning in their journal.

Parents should check the journal on a weekly basis to ensure that homework is being completed and to ensure that they are aware of any feedback or notes present from the teachers. Parents are asked to commit to signing their son or daughter's journal weekly.

Subject teachers are responsible for setting homework on a regular basis and correcting this work and giving the student necessary feedback to improve the learning for that student. Homework should be differentiated where applicable so that all students within the class are capable of completing necessary tasks. They should allocate time in the class to allow students to note homework given. In the event that a student does not present homework this should be dealt with according to the code of positive behaviour. Teachers can use Microsoft Teams for assignment details if they wish to.

Class tutors should monitor Junior students' homework in SPHE class and have conversations with students regarding homework where necessary.

Year Heads can be notified of no homework presented when the teacher has consistently followed the Level 1 procedures in accordance with the code of positive behaviour. The Year head can meet with and discuss how to improve the homework completion going forward with the student and parents if necessary.

Learning support staff should liaise with teachers of individual students in order to give advice as to how those students with additional learning needs can best be accommodated in relation to managing homework.

School management offers an after-school Homework Club to all students. Homework Club takes place from 3.45pm-5pm, Monday to Wednesday. A study skills seminar may be organised for 3rd and 6th years, in addition to an ongoing in-house programme.

5. Homework Procedure

In the case where a student is neglecting their homework the following procedure will be implemented. In order to, ensure that all students are completing homework to the best of their ability the Level 1 four step process will apply.

- On the first occasion of no homework a note will be recorded by the teacher on VShare, in accordance with step 1 - Level 1 in the code of positive behaviour. Discussions regarding 'Being prepared for class including homework' can take place between the student and teacher.
- All further occasions of no homework should be recorded on VShare and dealt with in accordance with the schools' code of positive behaviour. Specifically, in the following incidences additional work will be given, then a phone call home will be made by the subject teacher, then a restorative meeting will be scheduled for the student with the subject teacher before referral to the student's tutor.
- The Tutor should have a pastoral conversation before it becomes a behaviour incident or before they decide it needs to be addressed by the Year Head.

Types of Homework

Each subject department sets assignments which are specific to its particular subject area. Homework includes the following types of activity:

- Development of oral skills
- Development of mathematical skills
- Writing of essays/articles/speeches/short stories/dialogues/poems
- Listening to and/or viewing radio or TV programmes/use of the internet
- Drawing and illustrating
- Practicing an instrument/ singing
- Playing sport
- Making notes
- Reviewing
- Reading for pleasure/ investigation/ information
- Research
- Revision
- Completing assignment and projects within a specified period

*Above list not exhaustive.

6. Guidelines for students regarding homework

As students vary in ability levels and in speed of completion of work, it would be impossible to indicate precisely the amount of time that should be spent by each individual student in the completion of homework and independent revision on a daily basis. We do however, offer the following table as suggested by research and best practice for what might be appropriate at different levels as students move up through the school.

First Year: 1 hour.

Second Year: 1 ½ hours.

Third Year: 2 hours.

Fourth Year homework will be given but is usually less frequent than in other years and will often consist of research for project work.

Fifth and Sixth Years: 2 ½ hours.

Homework/Study Guidelines:

1. Students are advised to draw up a study/revision timetable for themselves.
2. Guidelines on homework/study skills shall be made available to students.
3. The quality of homework is far more important than the amount of time devoted to it.
4. Students with Additional Needs will be given due consideration in consultation with the learning support teacher and parents.
5. Extra-Curricular activities i.e. sport, recreation or part-time work should not interfere with completing study or homework.
6. Absence from class for extra-curricular activities is not acceptable for failure to complete assigned homework.
7. Weekend study and revision are important, particularly for 3rd, 5th and 6th year students.

Evaluating the Homework Policy

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by students, parents/guardians and teachers. The key criteria will be the extent to which the policy is contributing to the progress students make at school and their attitude to their learning.

Appendices:

Guidelines for the Student:

1. At the beginning of First year establish a good study/homework routine.
2. Students must always have their homework journal in class.
3. All homework assignments should be recorded before the end of each class and entered into the homework journal.
4. If necessary, check the assignment with the teacher before the end of the class.
5. Complete and present homework to the required standard and given deadline.
6. Ensure that written homework is their own work.
7. To complete homework on time.
8. To have the phone switched off during homework and study periods.
9. To check and complete what homework was assigned after a return to school from a time of absence such as extracurricular events.

10. Students should regularly check their Microsoft Teams accounts for updates.

Guidelines for Parents / Guardians:

1. To encourage and provide a supervisory role in ensuring students do homework and establish a good study and homework routine at home.
2. Arrange for after-school 'Homework Club', if applicable.
3. To provide suitable conditions so that students can do homework, free from distraction; (Distractions for some students may include the mobile phone, noisy areas of study, television, laptops, iPads or games consoles.)
4. To ensure that adequate time is spent on homework.
5. To check and sign the homework journal weekly.
6. To read and sign notes from the teachers, where necessary.
7. To contact the subject teacher if concerns arise about homework.
8. To be available to discuss concerns regarding homework and study with the subject teacher or Year Head.
9. To provide a written explanatory note in the student's journal if a student is unable to do homework.

10. To attend annual Parent/Teacher meetings.
11. To support the Homework and Study Policy of the school.