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HOMEWORK POLICY

Loreto College Foxrock is an all-girls voluntary Roman Catholic School under the trusteeship of the Loreto Sisters.

The Loreto philosophy of education is centred in God and is rooted in Gospel values where truth, freedom, justice, sincerity and joy find expression.

Loreto College Foxrock endeavours to provide a caring and respectful community, which promotes the growth of each individual. We strive to create a supportive learning environment, which encourages each person to develop her full spiritual, intellectual, moral, physical and social potential.

This policy is rooted in the school's fundamental aim to foster in students a spirit of self reliance, independence, co-operation and responsibility and to provide them with the skills for life-long learning.

'Students are encouraged to strive for excellence at the level of each one's potential in all areas of life and work' (Kolkata Guidelines 2003)

THE PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK

The purpose of homework is threefold:

1. To revise what is taught that day in class
2. To carry out and complete assigned work
3. To reinforce the work learned last week/last month etc

THEREFORE, THERE IS ALWAYS HOMEWORK TO BE DONE



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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.

Journal

The school Journal, which is distributed at the beginning of each year, is a very important document. Students are required to have their journals in their possession while in school and when doing homework. The school journal must be kept free of graffiti or any other offensive material.

If a student either defaces or loses her journal she will be required to replace it immediately at an increased cost.

Each student must keep a record of all homework in her Journal. Journals are monitored regularly and are available to teachers and parents/guardians should they wish to communicate with each other.

Copies/Materials

Each student should have the required copy books for each subject and should enter written homework into the correct copy. It should be dated e.g. homework for day/month/year. The work should be written clearly. This assists with revision.



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Time Spent at Homework

The following guidelines are recommended:

- First Year 8-9 hours per week
- Second Year 10-11 hours per week
- Third Year 13-14 hours per week
- Transition Year varies depending on project work and activities
- Fifth Year 16-17 hours per week
- Sixth Years 20 hours per week. Dedicated weekend study is also essential.

Each subject department will have particular homework guidelines. Teachers will advise students of these requirements.

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

It is expected that all written homework be completed on time, presented on time and to the best of the student's ability.

If a student has been absent the onus is on her to discover what work has been set and endeavour to complete it. If the student has been ill for some time, concessions may be made in order to allow the student complete missed assignments by arrangement with the subject teacher.

It is strongly advised that students should not be employed in part-time work during term.

The Role of Parents/Guardians in Supporting Students



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The school expects parents/guardians co-operation in the implementation of this policy and are encouraged to provide a suitable place in which students can do their homework.

It is parents/guardians responsibility to inform the school or class teacher of any reasons why a student was unable to complete a homework assignment. A parent/guardian may communicate this through the student's journal.

Parents/guardians are expected to check the journal regularly and sign notes from school personnel.

Since computers are an integral part of today's world, it is inevitable that the Internet is a source for much research. Parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor their daughter's use of the internet. Please see the school's 'Acceptable Use Policy' document.

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

Supervised Study

An after-school study programme is on offer within the school. Sixth, Fifth and Third Year students are invited to apply for a place at the beginning of the school year.

Study Skills

It is important that students have frequent and increasing opportunities to develop and consolidate their competence as independent learners. Each individual teacher provides tips and guidelines on the specific requirements within his/her subject area. Intensive study programmes are organised for Fifth and Sixth Years by the Guidance Counsellor who also addresses the topic with the parents/guardians and students of First Year.

The SPHE Programme also deals with study skills in Junior Cycle.



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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, with their individual learning needs. Subject teachers will collaborate where possible with the Learning Support teacher to ensure tasks are manageable for the student. For some students the continuing involvement of parents/guardians is very valuable.

Feedback for Students

Students look mainly to teachers for a response on the quality of their work.

A variety of methods are used to correct homework depending on the subject, the content and the age of the students:

Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluating Homework Policy

Teachers are in a position to evaluate the quality of homework and the contribution it is making to learning. Subject departments monitor homework at subject meetings. The system can also be evaluated through staff appraisal at staff meetings.

This homework policy needs to be reviewed after two years. The key criterion will be the extent to which the policy is contributing to the progress students make at school and their attitude to learning.

Review and Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 21 May 2007.

This policy was reviewed in the academic year 2009/10.