



## **HOMEWORK AND STUDY 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 academic, intellectual, moral, physical, spiritual 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)**

### **Definition of Homework:**

Homework is work set by the subject teacher to be completed by the student at home. The list of possible homework options is included in the policy.

### **Definition of Study:**

Study is self-directed work on prior learning that the student undertakes on a regular basis. Examples may include but are not limited to; making mind-maps, Kahoot, flashcards etc. The student is encouraged to choose a method that best suits that topic in that particular subject and their learning style e.g. kinaesthetic, visual etc

### **THE PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK**

The purpose of homework is:

1. To reinforce work covered in class with assignments relevant to specific learning intentions.
2. To encourage curiosity and investigation of subject matter.
3. To prepare students for exams – regular assessment, term and end of year assessment and state examination assessment.
4. To maximise learning potential for each student.



5. To foster an effective study habit, thus enabling each student to be a self-directed learner.

### **Rationale**

- Homework reinforces and consolidates skills and understanding developed in school.
- To facilitate students' ownership of learning; responsibility, resilience, self-discipline, time management and perseverance.
- To encourage the skills needed for students to study effectively on their own. It promotes independent thinking and self-directed learning.
- Students who complete homework regularly gain self-discipline and motivation; skills that are intrinsic to their futures as life-long learners.
- To foster research skills.
- To facilitate evaluation of learning for both student and teacher.
- To form positive work habits outside the school day which are crucial for exam preparation.

Under the Junior Cycle framework, Classroom based assessments (CBAs) provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their learning and skills in ways not possible in a pen and paper examination, developing their verbal communication skills and investigation skills.

Students will have the opportunity to engage with a range of other learning experiences as part of their Junior Cycle programme and these will be recorded on the JCPA. Other learning experiences play a critical role in ensuring that students are provided with a broad and balanced educational experience.

### **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 at all times, kept free of graffiti or any other offensive material. If a student's journal is defaced or lost, she will be required to replace it and incur a replacement fee. Breaches as outlined above will be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour.

**Social media platforms are not a substitute for the homework journal**



Each student must keep a written record of all homework (both learning and written) in her Journal. Journals are monitored regularly by tutors and should be available to teachers and parents/guardians. Journals should be signed by parents/ guardians weekly. Homework activities may include:

- Written assignments
- Learning assignments
- Essay writing
- Reading
- Investigations
- Interviews
- Simple experiments
- Research
- 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
- Mind-maps
- Drawing
- Word processing
- Projects
- Watching a television documentary
- Listening comprehension etc.

\*\* this list is not exhaustive

Students are encouraged to set academic targets. They should record, reflect and assess their own progress, utilising all advice, guidelines and recommendations provided.



### **Copies/Materials**

Each student should have the required materials (copy, book, equipment, device etc) for each subject and should enter homework into the correct place assigned by the teacher. It should be dated e.g. homework for day/month/year. Written work should be legible so as to assist with revision.

### **Time Spent at Homework and Study:**

In the interest of student wellbeing, there should be a healthy balance between schoolwork, exercise and outside school activities to ensure students maintain a holistic approach to their individual development.

The following guidelines are recommended however these may increase or decrease relevant to the time of year e.g. when preparation for exams, can vary and fluctuated throughout the year

- First Year            8-9 hours per week
- Second Year        10-11 hours per week
- Third Year            13-14 hours per week
- Transition Year    Time varies depending on time of year, class assignments etc (8-10 hours)
- Fifth Year            16-17 hours per week
- Sixth Years        20+ hours per week. Dedicated weekend study is also essential.

Students should be prepared to allocate time at the weekend/during holidays to study and complete homework. This will vary according to the time of year and proximity to state exams, house exams etc. Each subject department will have particular homework guidelines. Teachers communicate clear instructions on homework to the class and this is recorded in the journal by the student. If no homework is set, the students should revisit material from class to reinforce understanding.

The pace at which students work will vary according to the individuals' needs and ability. Homework should be appropriate to the ability of the student, supporting differentiation and promoting inclusion of all students. Teachers and parents/guardians need to consider this when setting and completing homework.



It is expected that all homework be completed on time, presented on time and to the best of the student's ability. Homework should be presented in a neat and legible manner. Non-completion of homework, breaches will be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour.

When a student is absent from class, either on school activity/other reason, it is the responsibility of the student to find out what homework has been set and complete the homework/ learning. If the student has been ill for some time, concessions may be made in order to allow the student complete outstanding assignments by arrangement with the subject teacher. Students should seek clarification from the subject teacher if unclear.

**It is strongly advised that students should not be engaged in part-time employment during term time.**

#### **The Role of Parents/Guardians in Supporting Students study environment:**

As primary educators the role of parents/guardians is vital in the successful implementation of the Homework Policy. Parents are actively encouraged to monitor their daughter's learning and homework. While it is encouraged that parents/guardians assist with homework, it is in the students' best interest to present their own work. Students learn best when provided with a suitable place free from distractions and interruptions where students can engage in homework and study.

It is parents/guardians' responsibility to inform the school or class teacher of reasons why a student did not complete a homework assignment in the set timeframe. A parent/guardian may communicate this through the student's journal.

As active participant in their daughter's learning, parents/guardians are expected to sign the journal weekly and sign notes from school personnel.

As technology is an integral part of today's learning, 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'.



### **Supervised Study**

An after-school study programme which promotes a positive learning environment is available within the school. Sixth, Fifth and Third Year students are invited to apply for a place. There are 2 semesters, the first runs from September – January and semester 2 runs from February – May.

### **Study Skills**

Students have frequent opportunities to develop and consolidate their competence as independent learners. The school improvement plan underpins the concept of independent learning. Each subject teacher provides guidelines on the specific requirements within his/her subject area. The SPHE Programme supports learning strategies and assists students with time management and study skills.

### **Additional Educational Needs (AEN)**

In setting homework for students with AEN, teachers differentiate activities and assignments promoting inclusion within the class. Subject teachers consult the AEN Register. Subject teachers will collaborate with the AEN team to ensure tasks are manageable and appropriate for the students learning strengths and needs. Students with AEN can present their homework/assignments in a variety of formats which supports their learning. Individual skill practice can be incorporated without overloading the student. The continuing involvement of parents/guardians is very valuable. Where possible teachers will guide Exceptionally Able (EA) students in challenging their learning.

### **Feedback for Students**

Assessment for learning (AFL) is an approach to teaching and learning that provides feedback which students then used to improve their performance. Students become more involved in the learning process and from this gain confidence in their learning. A variety of strategies are used depending on the subject, the content and the age of the students:

- Class correction.
- Class discussion.
- Self- assessment



- Peer assessment
- Written feedback to students
- Verbal feedback to students

### **Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluating Homework Policy**

Teachers are able to evaluate the quality of homework and the contribution it is making to learning. Students are taught how to self-assess and improve homework to develop student's ownership of learning; responsibility, resilience, self-discipline, time management and perseverance.

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 three 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. Review in May 2019.

This policy will be reviewed in the academic year 2022/23