

SCOIL MHUIRE



KANTURK

Homework Policy

Ratified – April 2024

Mission Statement

Scoil Mhuire Kanturk is a Catholic co-educational secondary school under the Trusteeship of CEIST. We are committed to educating our students to their full potential in a spirit of equality and inclusiveness that welcomes and nurtures all of the diverse abilities and talents of the various communities we serve.

Aim of Policy

The aim of this policy is to provide a clear purpose, framework and guidelines relating to homework. This policy serves as a roadmap for maintaining standards of academic excellence, ensuring continuous and improved learning, supporting the wellbeing of individuals, and upholding the mission and values of Scoil Mhuire Kanturk.

Rationale

Homework is a means to enhance the educational experience for both students and teachers.

For students

Homework provides an opportunity to reinforce and apply concepts learned in the classroom, fostering a deeper understanding and retention of material. The process of completing homework cultivates self-discipline, fosters increased independence and responsibility, develops time management skills and prepares students for future academic endeavours and real-world challenges. Additionally, homework encourages active engagement with the subject matter, allowing students to explore their interests and extend their learning beyond the confines of the classroom. Homework also contributes to the development of Junior Cycle Key Skills as outlined in appendix 1.

For teachers

Assigning homework enables teachers to assess student understanding of the curriculum, identify areas of strength and weakness and tailor instruction to meet individual needs effectively. It serves as a diagnostic tool to gauge student progress, inform instructional planning and differentiate learning experiences accordingly.

Homework facilitates ongoing communication between teachers, students and parents/guardians as well as fostering collaboration and support networks essential for academic success.

Goals

Goals in assigning homework include;

- Fostering academic growth,
- Promoting responsibility,
- Facilitating meaningful learning experiences that extend beyond the school day, preparing students for lifelong learning and success,
- Providing a mechanism to enhance links between home and school in support of student learning and personal development.

Definition of Homework

Homework may take a number of formats and is not restricted to written work. Homework is subject based work assigned by a teacher, for completion by a student, alone or with others, outside of class. It may include among other formats including oral, aural, written, reading, practical research, reflections, portfolio, performance, project work or revision.

Differentiating Homework

In assigning homework teachers must recognise the significance of differentiating homework assignments and expectations for students with diverse educational needs such as high achievers or students with specific learning difficulties.

It is the responsibility of teachers to consult the school's Management Information System (MIS) and Student Support Files to develop individualised strategies and outcomes necessary for effective differentiation.

In addressing the unique strengths, weaknesses and learning styles of each student, teachers will tailor homework assignments to optimise engagement, understanding and student learning outcomes. For example:

- High achievers; not assigning additional quantities of homework but using enrichment activities that stimulate critical thinking and creativity.
- Students with specific learning difficulties: not reducing the quantity of homework but scaffolding assignments, offering additional resources or adjusting expectations to ensure accessibility and comprehension.

By embracing this responsibility to differentiate homework according to the diverse needs of students and using available resources and support systems, teachers uphold the principles of equity, accessibility and academic excellence, empowering every learner to reach their full potential.

Assigning and Recording of Homework

Homework can be assigned in class or online and is recorded by teachers through the Google Classroom platform. Additional instructions, resources and deadlines may also be uploaded to Google Classroom.

The recording of homework through this online platform allows absent students to access homework, instruction and resources.

Students should be informed of the resources required at home to complete homework before the end of class e.g. books required from lockers.

Homework assigned or recorded by teachers on Google Classroom after 16:00 (13:15 on Wednesday) is done so without the expectation for completion on the following day. By setting a cut-off time for homework assignments, typically after the end of the regular school day, teachers acknowledge the need for adequate time to engage meaningfully with their assignments while;

- balancing academic responsibilities with personal and extracurricular commitments.
- creating a clear boundary between schoolwork and personal time, ensuring that students are afforded the opportunity to maintain a healthy balance between academic responsibilities and other aspects of their lives.

Furthermore, homework will not be assigned during holiday periods, recognising the importance of providing students with uninterrupted breaks for family activities, self-care to rejuvenate and time to pursue personal interests.

Teachers may offer direction or guidance during these holiday periods with the understanding that students will address these tasks at their own discretion, with feedback provided upon their return to school. This approach empowers students to engage with learning on their own terms, fostering intrinsic motivation and a sense of ownership over their academic journey.

By adhering to these guidelines, teachers promote student well-being, autonomy and academic success while at the same time cultivating a learning environment that values holistic development and respects the diverse needs of learners. This approach promotes a healthy work-life balance, reduces stress levels among students, fosters a positive and supportive learning environment and empowers students to prioritise tasks accordingly.

It is the responsibility of students to access Google Classroom each day to retrieve and engage with assigned tasks.

Students are responsible for recording their homework assignments in their Student Journal. This serves as an organisational tool or reminder for students to track their homework responsibilities while allowing parents/guardians to monitor homework. The student Journal also offers an opportunity for parental communication on matters related to homework and facilitates monitoring of homework by the in-school management team.

Homework Rewards

Positive behaviour comments may be awarded by teachers via the school MIS where homework is considered to be of a consistently high standard. Positive homework comments may also be communicated through the School Journal.

School Supports

Supervised Study is available to all students on specified days typically between 16:00 and 17:30.

The supervised study programme begins in September and is offered for the duration of the school year (subject to demand). Supervised study operates on a 'pay as you go' basis and information regarding the costs can be obtained from Year Heads or via the school office. All information regarding the supervised study programme is communicated to parents/guardians and students in September and January of each school year.

Related Policies

- Code of Behaviour
- Inclusion Policy
- Internet & Website Usage Policy
- SPHE Policy
- Assessment Policy

Monitoring and Evaluating

The effectiveness of this homework policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed to ensure it effectively contributes to the overall progress of student learning.

Date of Board of Management ratification: 23-04-24

Signed by: 

Date for next review: March 2026

Appendix 1 – How Homework Contributes to the Development of the Junior Cycle Key Skills

The variety of homework set by subject teachers fosters the development of the Junior Cycle Key Skills. Key skills are activated in the classroom and further consolidated through homework.

Managing Myself: Homework tasks encourage students' to work independently. This key skill helps students' to understand themselves both as individuals and as learners so that they can develop personal goals and plans. It also helps them develop strategies to make considered decisions, to take action and to reflect on their progress.

Communicating: Homework helps students' develop good communication skills using a variety of media. As well as developing literacy skills it also develops learners' confidence in communicating, expressing opinions, writing, making oral presentations and presenting.

Being Creative: Homework tasks enable students' to develop their imagination and creativity as they explore different ways of doing things and of thinking. Students learn to find creative solutions to complete challenges and tasks while engaging with their assigned homework.

Working with Others: Homework may be completed alone or as part of a group e.g., pair or group project work, drama performance, using ICT for a group presentation.

Managing Information and Thinking: Homework tasks may involve gathering, recording, organising and evaluating information and data. Homework also promotes student self-reflection and fosters critical thinking.

Staying Well: Homework tasks in some subject areas may develop some of the 6 Indicators of Wellbeing and our Wellbeing programme aims to foster happy, confident, responsible and resilient students who feel connected to Scoil Mhuire Kanturk.

Being Literate: Homework develops literacy by encouraging students' to write/read/speak for a variety of purposes, to express ideas clearly and accurately, and to explore and create a variety of texts, including multimodal texts. Homework assigned which promotes literacy helps students' to develop their understanding and enjoyment of words and language.

Being Numerate: Homework tasks may involve students expressing ideas mathematically, for example, estimating, predicting and calculating. Homework linked to numeracy may require students to see patterns, trends or to gather, interpret and represent data.

