

# **SHIMNA INTEGRATED COLLEGE**



# **HOMEWORK POLICY**

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The homework policy has been developed in consultation with students, staff, parents and governors.

## **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK?**

Why do we need to give homework?

Everyone we consulted regards homework as an integral part of the curriculum and believes that it should be planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning. Effective homework practices need to be built up early on (Year 8) and develop progressively across the key stages (Year 14). We agree that homework which is set and managed effectively contributes to the raising of attainment. Homework helps to establish the habit of working independently, encouraging self discipline and organisational skills *“doing work at home helps you to learn better because you are doing it independently, no teacher help”* (Year 12 male student).

Homework consolidates and reinforces the work done in class *“going over your class work in your own time is worthwhile”* (Year 12 female student). Homework also allows students to build on the work done in class and homework tasks must be differentiated and appropriate to the needs of the individual, *“Science homework is given to further your knowledge”* (Year 11 male student).

Homework encourages parents to get involved in their child/s learning and the support of parents and carers is essential. Parents/carers assist in many ways, for example, helping their children at home, monitoring homework, providing encouragement and in some cases assisting with the marking of homework. Almost all of the parents surveyed find opportunities to talk to their daughter/son about their homework. *“I create opportunities to discuss homework”* (Parent of a Year 11 male student).

Homework enables the classroom teacher to assess/check on a regular basis if students have understood the work covered in class and how much progress the student is making. Students learn from their mistakes.

Each student is provided with a homework diary at the start of the academic year.

## **TYPES OF HOMEWORK TASKS**

The following list, though not exhaustive, indicates to parents and students the range of homework students might be asked to complete.

- Doing research/project work
- Reading
- Learning words or phrases e.g. vocabulary in modern languages, spelling, formulae etc.
- Completing department worksheets

- Essay writing or report writing
- Drawing or painting
- Designing
- Drafting
- Revision
- Simple experiments
- Interviews
- Making a model
- Visiting the public library
- Making notes
- Watching a recommended T.V. programme
- Doing coursework.
- Completing exercises on the internet (where students have access)

## **HOW OFTEN SHOULD HOMEWORK BE GIVEN?**

### **TIME ALLOCATION**

Parents/carers and students find it useful to be given broad guidelines as to how much time it is reasonable for students to spend on homework.

In years 8-10, each class will have a homework timetable drawn up by the form teacher at the beginning of the college year.

|         |                                  |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| Year 8  | 45 minutes to 90 minutes per day |
| Year 9  | 45 minutes to 90 minutes per day |
| Year 10 | 1 – 2 hours per day              |
| Year 11 | 2 – 2/3 hours per day            |
| Year 12 | 2 – 2/3 hours per day            |

The amount of time spent on homework will vary: it will increase when deadlines for coursework are pending and before tests or examinations. After exams it may diminish while teachers are marking.

## Sixth Form

|         |                     |
|---------|---------------------|
| Year 13 | 3 – 4 hours per day |
| Year 14 | 3 – 4 hours per day |

At sixth form stage the amount of time spent on homework will vary. Homework includes set home works, completing assignments and working on personal reading or personal study. We encourage students to develop independent study habits which include setting their own targets as this is good practice for third level study. Homework may be worked on in college during study time by the students and this is included in the recommended 3-4 hours per day.

### **AT WHAT POINT IS HOMEWORK SET IN A LESSON AND HOW?**

All departments will set the homework at an appropriate point in the lesson. The setting of homework should not be rushed and adequate time should be given for explanation and for the students to clarify what they are to do.

Each teacher will write the homework on the board and the date it is due to be handed in. Each teacher will check the homework diaries to ensure it is written down.

### **TEACHER GUIDELINES FOR SETTING HOMEWORK**

#### **Teachers should;**

- 1** Plan homework as an integral part of curriculum planning with clear identification of its relationship with the class work.
- 2** Set clearly explained tasks that can be completed within the allocated homework time, and that are matched as far as possible to the abilities of the students.
- 3** Explain how the homework will be marked according to the criteria identified in the departmental marking policy.
- 4** Use a variety of strategies so that homework tasks are varied in type and enable students to draw upon the range of resources that are available outside school, such as people, libraries, museums and electronic media.
- 5** Each teacher will check that homework is completed.
- 6** Ensure that the work is marked according to the criteria, dated and annotated according to each department's marking policy.
- 7** Provide feedback to the students on their progress, identifying areas for

- improvement and praising homework which provides evidence of a student's best endeavour.
- 8** Keep accurate homework records according to department policy.
  - 9** Use the whole school procedure for recognising progress and commitment to work, e.g. achievement slips, SIMS and postcards.
  - 10** Remind students that the supervised homework club is available Monday to Thursday from 3.30 pm to 4.30 pm. Evening study is available to senior students, Monday-Thursday until 8.00pm.

### **PARENT/CARERS GUIDELINES**

Parents/carers should:

- 1** Have a copy of the homework timetable, (Years 8-10)
- 2** Check the homework diary daily and sign the homework diary weekly.
- 3** Discuss their child's homework task with them.
- 4** Allow your children to talk about homework tasks even though some topics might be new or unfamiliar to parents/guardians themselves.
- 5** Encourage, praise and support your children.
- 6** Check presentation, handwriting and spelling.
- 7** Ensure that the homework is done conscientiously and as far as possible in appropriate surroundings.
- 8** Fully support the college in any measures employed to deal with homework which have not been presented, completed or which does not represent a child's best effort.
- 9** Ensure that your child gets details of the homework, completion dates etc, if absent for any reason.
- 10** Any concerns about their child's homework should be taken up with the class teacher.
- 11** Follow up on any homework letters sent by departments.
- 12** Encourage their child to use the supervised after school homework club which operates Monday to Thursday 3.30 pm to 4.30 pm in the college library.

## **STUDENT GUIDELINES**

### **Students should:**

- 1** Bring the homework diary to college every day.
- 2** Write down all homework in the appropriate section of the diary.
- 3** Record when the homework is to be handed in.
- 4** Complete the homework to the best of their ability.
- 5** If absent for any reason, find out what homework needs to be done and complete it for the next class.
- 6** Complete any corrections recommended by your teacher.
- 7** At advanced level students will set their own targets for completion of tasks to meet the deadline.

## **WHAT HAPPENS IF HOMEWORK IS NOT COMPLETED**

Failure to produce homework or presentation of careless homework is taken seriously by the college as we are aware that persistent failure to complete/hand in homework can only result in underachievement.

- 1** Students will be reminded to bring the completed homework to the next lesson.
- 2** Concerns about incomplete or undone homework will be passed on to the form teacher.
- 3** Concerns about incomplete or undone homework will be passed on to the parents/carers through a letter home.
- 4** If there is persistent failure to complete homework, the class teacher will phone the parent/carer so that, together we can find a solution.

Each department will have a statement in their handbook on how to deal with homework not completed.

## **HOW CAN HOMEWORK ACT AS A TOOL FOR IMPROVING THE LEARNING OF STUDENTS?**

- 1** Certain types of homework can be marked in class by swapping books. This encourages students to learn from each other's work and to pay attention to what they have done well and areas in which they need to improve.

- 2 When homework tasks have been given back marked by the teacher, teachers will address any common problems with the homework to the whole class.
- 3 Teachers will see individuals who may have particular problems with the homework.
- 4 Students should complete any corrections recommended by their teacher.
- 5 Teachers will make a point of displaying examples of good homework and the work of those students that reflects an improvement in their work.
- 6 Teachers will use the system of achievement slips and postcards home to encourage students.

**The Board of Governors agrees with and fully supports the content and implementation of this policy.**