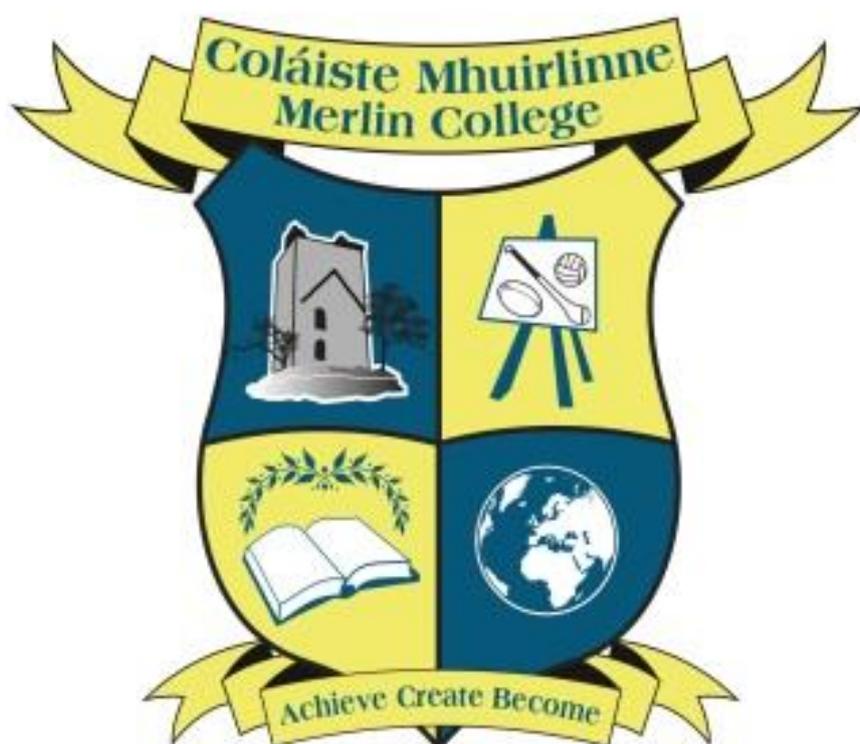


# Homework Policy

Coláiste Mhuirlinne/ Merlin College

Doughiska, Galway City.



## Introduction

Coláiste Mhuirlinne/Merlin College believes in the importance of homework in helping students to achieve their potential while enabling them to become active, independent learners, and in promoting a love of learning.

## Scope of the Homework Policy

The Study and Homework policy outlines the importance of homework and the key role Students, Parents and Teachers play in supporting this policy document.

## Policy Statement

The purpose of homework is to help the student to revisit and reflect on work that has taken place in the classroom, or to encourage further reflection, with the ultimate aim of enhancing academic achievement and developing student skills. It consolidates, reinforces and supplements the work done in class and promotes independent learning and creativity.

This policy is in line with our Schools Mission statement

***“Coláiste Mhuirlinne’s/ Merlin’s College’s aim is to foster an environment of respect, integrity and positive learning in a safe and enjoyable setting”***

## Aim of the Policy

- To develop student’s positive attitude to study and homework that builds upon a positive attitude to school, education and lifelong learning.
- To value the role of Parents and Teachers in promoting effective study skills and homework routines for the student.
- To outline the action to be taken when students fail to comply with the Policy.

## Purpose of Homework and Study

- To provide an opportunity to recap on learning that takes place in the classroom.
- To prepare for the next lesson.
- To practice independent study.
- To give greater ownership of learning.
- To give an opportunity to research/discover for future topics
- To provide an opportunity to improve short and long term memory
- To provide a foundation for academic progress.
- To enhance interest in the subjects and topics.

- To engage students in effective revision.
- To monitor student progress.
- To give an opportunity for feedback on learning.
- To identify problem learning areas.
- To reduce exam stress.
- To provide a stepping stone for State Examinations.

## Main Types of Homework

Teachers assign different types of homework to accomplish specific purposes. Below is a list of types of homework and examples. The list is **not exhaustive**.

- *Oral*: Practicing public speaking, new terms, reciting scripts.
- *Written*: Essay writing, report writing, checklists and answering questions from texts.
- *Aural*: Listening to language cds, listening to the News, interviewing.
- *Research*: Researching topics and using ICT.
- *Project Work*: Planning for a debate, role plays, research, and fieldtrip.
- *Revision*: Revising for exams, class tests, worksheets.
- *Creative*: Designing, drawing, making, and creating.
- *Practical*: Preparing, practicing, making.
- *Reflection*: Reflection sheets, scaling, journals.
- *Study Notes*: Revision notes, concept maps, mind maps, placemats.
- *Interview*: Recording, transcribing, constructing, reflecting.
- *Design*: Artistic, planning, creating.

## What is the purpose of the School Journal in relation to Homework?

- *Record of Homework*: Students record their homework into the correct day with details specified – page, number, questions etc.
- *Method of Communication*: There is a weekly section in the journal for “communication to and from home”. Homework issues can be noted in this section for parent/teacher information. Parents can also view a “positive comments” in this section highlighting student merits from teachers. Parents/ guardians must sign this weekly.
- *Organisational Support*: The journal provides organisational support with pages for subject information, to do lists and examination information all of which assist with homework completion.

- *Setting Targets:* The journal has an entire section providing information regarding study skills and target setting. This information assists in ensuring that students manage their time in relation to homework.

**Please note:** The student journal must be kept free of graffiti or any other offensive material. If a student defaces or loses their journal she/he will be required to replace it at an additional cost.

## Role/Responsibilities of the Student

- To establish a good study/homework routine from first year.
- To place the Student Journal on the table in each class.
- To record all homework assignments in the student journal.
- To clarify issues with homework with the teacher before the end of the class.
- To always attempt homework.
- To place attention to learning/reading homework as well as written homework.
- To have a homework buddy to consult with if issues about homework arise. Students involved in extracurricular activities must complete classwork and homework given in their absence.
- To complete and present homework on a given deadline.
- To ensure that written homework is their own.
- To complete homework on the day it is received.
- To ensure their journal is signed at the end of each week by parents.

## Role/Responsibilities of Parents

- To encourage and provide a supervisory role in ensuring students complete homework and establish a good study and homework routine at home.
- To provide suitable conditions so that students can complete homework, free from distraction, suitable desk, chair, light and heat. Ensure television, music and mobile phone is switched off.
- To ensure that necessary materials and equipment are available.
- To ensure that adequate time is spent completing homework.
- To check and sign the homework journal weekly.
- To sign notes from the teachers, if necessary.
- To contact the subject teacher if concerns arise.
- To provide a written explanatory note in the students journal if for a valid reason a student is unable to do homework
- To attend Parent/Teacher meetings.
- To support the study and homework policy of the school
- To encourage their son/daughter to attend Homework Club
- To encourage their son/daughter to attend clubs that will support subject specific tasks – Example: Maths Clinic.

## Role/Responsibilities of the Teacher

- To give clear instructions on homework assignments.
- To write the homework on the board.
- To ensure students have sufficient time to write their homework into their school journal.
- To keep an account of the homework given to students.
- To vary homework methods depending on the topic under study.
- To check that the homework is attempted/completed by the given deadline.
- To correct homework using different methods.
- To keep an account of the homework completed by students.
- To differentiate homework to cater for a range of abilities.
- To correct, mark and return homework.
- To provide regular and effective feedback to students on their homework performance.
- To record lack of homework in the students journal.
- To intervene (Link with Class Tutor and Year Head) if non completion of homework is a persistent issue.
- To be available to speak to parents regarding homework issues.

## The Role of the Class Tutor

- To explain the importance of study and homework to students.
- To check the student's diaries for the recording of homework and for parents signature.
- To check and connect with the student if a concern has arose which may involve: organising the students materials with them, organising the student's locker or putting a home-work/study plan in place for the student.

## In-School Homework Supports

- *Homework Club:* A Homework Club for First Year Students takes place once a week.
- *Assemblies:* At daily assemblies each morning the importance of homework is a frequent topic.
- *Class Teachers:* Class Teachers use various methods of giving, correcting and providing feedback on homework to support students.
- *Year Heads:* Year Heads encourage students, provides homework and study guidance and intervene to provide support when homework issues arise.
- *Class Tutors:* The class tutor has a role in first year induction and hence explains each section of the student's journal and homework procedures on their first day at school. Throughout the year the tutor encourages the development of study skills, encourages exam preparation and after school study as well as undertaking the role of caring for a class group to encourage learning.
- *Student Journal:* The student journal is designed to assist student organisation in relation to homework with a purposeful section for communication with parents.
- *Guidance Counsellor:* The Guidance Teachers provide study skills support.

- *SEN Teachers:* SEN teachers provide class teachers with advice regarding homework for SEN students.
- *SNA's:* SNA's ensure that homework is recorded in the student journal.

## Appropriate Methods of Feedback to Students

Teacher feedback to students regarding homework is important for students to make progress. Teachers check student's homework regularly using a variety of methods depending on the type of homework set. **Examples:**

- Teacher oral/written feedback (Using AFL Methods: 2 Stars and a Wish).
- Peer feedback.
- Student reflection on their own work (Learning Logs/ Scaling).
- Feedback on Practical Work is recorded in the Student Journal.

## Special Educational Needs

Subject teachers use differentiation when giving homework to students. There is collaboration between Learning Support and Resource teachers and class teachers regularly to ensure homework is manageable. Team teaching is very effective in ensuring that students are clear about their homework before the end of class. Learning Support and Resource teachers work in guiding students through difficult tasks. This support is vital for students in their learning and in completing tasks and projects.

## Dealing with Student Non-Completion of Homework

If homework is not completed the teacher intervenes using different strategies named below before referring the issue to the Year Head. Teachers examine each case of non-presentation of homework on an individual basis.

- Teachers determine why homework is not completed.
- Teachers give students an opportunity to complete the homework again.
- Teachers note the issue in the Student Journal.
- Teachers link with the Class Tutor and/or SEN department.
- Teachers may conduct lunchtime detention to ensure that homework is completed.

When interventions are exhausted and the non-completion of homework continues, a referral to the Year Head for guidance is necessary. The Year Head will contact home and decide on a suitable course of action to remedy the situation.