

Abbey Community College

Homework Policy

Introduction:

Homework is an integral part of the learning process and learning continues through the completion of homework. Homework and target setting play an important part in helping students to reach their full potential and should be a positive experience. In Abbey Community College we believe that homework and target setting play a pivotal role in the provision of a successful educational experience. The self-discipline required to complete a homework task should be fostered from the beginning of first year as it is vital at later stages of post-primary education and beyond. Student record books should contain all work to be carried out at home and correct use leads to vastly improved time management and organisational skills. The student record book should also contain the exam targets as set by the student and should be discussed with both teachers and parents/guardians and reviewed regularly. These journals provide a link between parents/guardians and teachers and correspondence via the journal is essential. Not only does homework and target setting lead to students working independently it also reinforces skills learned in class.

Rationale:

The purpose of homework and target setting 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 aim of enhancing academic achievement and developing student skills. Homework is given to supplement what is currently being covered in the class and may involve recollection of data or creation of a piece of work based on guidelines from the teacher.

Homework band Target Setting aim to:

- Help students to progress through learning outside of the classroom.
- Allow students to develop the practice of independent learning.
- Reinforce work carried out in the classroom while it is still fresh in students' minds and therefore more likely to be retained.
- Enhance the educational experience.
- Foster self-discipline and self-motivation in the student, which will be beneficial throughout his/her school career.
- Create a meaningful link between teachers, parents/guardians and students, through journal correspondence.
- Develop an understanding of journal entry, reminders, deadlines, and time management, therefore increasing organisational skills.
- Foster ownership of learning and develop the skills required for independent learning.

Procedures:

- Each subject teacher will set homework regularly. The nature of the work will vary between year groups, different classes, and topics of study.
- Teachers will ensure that all instructions concerning homework are clear to all students and sufficient time is allowed for the student to write down the homework in his/her journal.
- Teachers, Tutors and Year Heads will check that pupils are recording homework correctly.
- Work will be assessed, and pupils will be provided with feedback in a way that facilitates ongoing improvement and learning, and acknowledges achievements made.
- It is recommended that homework should be linked with and integrated into a programme of teaching and learning thereby forming part of the process of Assessment for Learning. It should be designed in such a way as to offer the students opportunities for self-assessment.
- Each teacher will check exam targets regularly and discuss these targets with the students to ensure they are specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic and time-bound (SMART).
- Parents/guardians are also encouraged to check and discuss exam targets with their son/daughter using the SMART approach.
- In adopting the Assessment for Learning approach, the teacher gives feedback in four key areas in the student's learning cycle.
 - What homework the student has completed correctly.
 - What Improvements the student could make to improve their work.
 - What the next step/s should be to improve performance or understanding.
 - Is the student reaching his/her exam target? What adjustments need to be made to the exam targets?
- This kind of feedback will be most helpful when the learning intentions and criteria for success are clearly understood by the students. The feedback should relate to the task in hand, the learning intention and the criteria for success.
- Records of homework, grades and comments should be maintained by each teacher.

Failure to hand in homework:

- The subject teacher will record the non-presentation of homework and / or incomplete homework on VS Ware (0 points)
- Failure to complete homework three times for a teacher will result in 5 negative points. This will be recorded on VS Ware.

- Persistent non-presentation of homework will be brought to the attention of the Year Head, in written report form, to allow the situation to be further investigated.
- A student may be placed on a student report card to monitor their progress.
- A student who continues to persist with non-presentation of homework will:
 - Be put on detention.
 - Receive in-school suspension.

Guidance for Parents/Guardians:

Homework and target setting are an integral elements of school life, and in today's hectic lifestyle, must be included in a daily routine. As parents/guardians, you play an important role in creating an environment where your son/daughter can complete all homework tasks effectively. Establishing a homework routine will help encourage your son/daughter to view homework as a daily and necessary exercise.

It is of paramount importance that the correct atmosphere is created for undertaking homework. A quiet place without distractions should be used. Television, mobile phone, tablets, computer games and such activities should only be permitted when homework has been completed. Ensure others in the household respect the efforts of your child in doing his/her homework.

Homework for students of all ages is very important. Talk to your son/daughter about the subjects they like and dislike, help them to focus on the positive elements of all subjects. Listen to your son/daughter and let them know you understand. Look at their homework and display an interest in their activities. If your son/daughter is showing signs of stress, or is struggling with his/her homework, enquire how you may help him/her.

Recommended average time for completion of homework	
Year	Hours per school day on homework and revision
1 st Year	1 to 2
2 nd Year	2 to 2.5
3 rd Year	2.5 to 3
Transition Year	Variable in accordance with project work
5 th Year	3
6 th Year	3+(minimum)

Homework supports provided by school:

- The school offers a provision of after school study for third and sixth years to facilitate the completion of homework and revision. This incurs a fee. This takes place Monday to Friday each evening after school for 2 hours.
- There is also a homework club available to 1st years to support those who are having difficulty managing and completing homework tasks after school.
- If you have any concerns regarding your child's homework, you may contact the teacher (specific subject) or Year Head (general query) by contacting the office and making an appointment.

Guidance for students:

- Students must record all home work in their student record book.
- Students must complete all homework to the best of their ability.
- It is the responsibility of students involved in extra-curricular activities to find out and complete homework assigned in their absence.
- Students should seek clarification from the teacher on any aspect of their homework of which they are unsure.
- Use the SRB effectively; tick off work as it is completed.
- Students must make sure their homework is completed and available for correction at the allocated time.
- Students are expected to present all homework on time and in a tidy, legible and organised form; examiners cannot award marks for illegible work.
- Students should ensure that their exam targets are keep up to date.

Motivating Students to Produce Quality Homework:

- Ensure assigned task is recorded in student record book.
- Engage in dialogue to prepare students on how to approach homework and target setting.
- Sample answers are provided where necessary.
- Time is allowed in class for preparation of homework.
- Provide written / verbal constructive feedback on homework submitted.
- Provide positive reinforcement and praise for quality homework submitted.

The Assignment of Homework for Special Educational Needs Students:

- Any relevant information relating to individual students with special educational needs is given to staff by school management and/or the SEN team.
- The Special Educational Needs co-ordinator and Learning Support teachers work with individual teachers as required.
- Special educational needs students are identified and may be assessed, and appropriate support facilities put in place e.g. one-to-one tuition which may include help with homework, physical access to classrooms.
- Each student's experience and grasp of a subject is naturally going to be different. We don't expect the same standards from all students. We encourage each student to develop to the best of their ability and to engage with their subjects at the appropriate academic level.