



Homework, Assessment & Reporting Policy

St Patrick's College

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Homework Policy

The benefits of homework are numerous. Homework allows students to consolidate what they have learned already in class and also to prepare for future class work and examinations both as independent learners and under the guidance of their class teachers.

Homework is also valuable as a student gets older because it promotes self-discipline. Being able to work on one's own or as part of a revision group is a vital skill for the later stages of secondary education, third level education and also the workplace. Homework gives pupils valuable experience of working to deadlines and facilitates staff with their marking schedules.

Homework is also important because it can involve parents or guardians in work for mutual benefit.

At St Patrick's College we strive to make homework worthwhile and purposeful. Homework can take a variety of formats including the following:

1. Written Assignments.
2. Creative Assignments.
3. Learning Assignments.
4. Revision Work.
5. Speech and presentation preparation.
6. Collecting and preparing information for projects.
7. Listening to Aural pieces e.g. music, modern languages
8. Watching educational programmes or documentaries.

Individual teachers will set and correct homework regularly each week for their classes. The types of homework and the time needed to complete each task will vary based on year group, class level and the topic being studied. Furthermore, teachers will differentiate homework between students in their classes.

The correcting and marking of student's homework forms an important part of our assessment policy. Teachers aim to return marked homework to the pupils as soon as possible, for inclusion in that topic of work and while the exercise is fresh in the pupils' mind.

Students absent from school due to extra-curricular activities are expected to establish and complete assignments that they have on the next day of school. In many cases, a text message or phone call to a class mate can easily establish this.

Students who are out sick and miss homework assignments will be given a period of grace to complete said work.

Guidelines for the appropriate amount of time to spend on homework:

As students vary in ability levels and the speed of completion of work, it is difficult to indicate precisely the amount of time that should be spent by the individual on the completion of homework on a daily basis. The school offers the following timetable as a general guideline for what might be appropriate at the various levels of schooling:

1st Year – 1 to 2 hours per day on homework and revision.

2nd Year – 1.5 to 2 hours per day on homework and revision.

3rd Year – 2 to 3 hours per day on homework and revision.

5th Year - 2 to 3 hours per day on homework and revision.

6th Year – 3+ hours per day on homework and revision. Weekend study and revision is also essential.

Homework Timetable

At the end of first term, teachers of First and Second Year students will create a homework timetable with expectations for homework including time spent on homework, days of homework, type of homework etc.

Office 365 and Homework Assignments

Every student at St Patrick's College is given a school based e mail address and access to Microsoft Office 365. Teachers are able to set and correct homework/classwork but also work with students to help them to edit and re-edit their work.

Special Educational Needs and Homework

Those students availing of learning support or with psychological assessments may avail of different ways of presenting their homework i.e.

1. Use of laptop
2. Voice/video recordings.
3. Oral presentations
4. Drawings/ Mind maps.

This list is not exhaustive and can be adapted to individual student's needs and the needs of the particular subjects.

St Patrick's College will strive to accommodate all types of homework initiatives in line with the considerations granted at the state examinations.

How will St Patrick's College help students to organise their homework?

1. Each student is given a homework diary at the beginning of the school year. Students must write their homework in this diary every day. This includes future project deadlines which has a dedicated page in the school journal.
2. Teachers will strive to make their instructions relating to homework clear to all of their students.
3. Teachers will mark and/or comment on homework regularly in a way that is helpful to their students.
4. Class tutors will check journals on a weekly basis to ensure that details are being filled in correctly.

How can Parents/Guardians help with Homework?

1. Parents/Guardians should check their child's homework journal regularly. The journal must be signed on a weekly basis.
2. Parents/Guardians should contact the school to discuss any issues or concerns they have regarding homework.
3. Parents/Guardians should help their child to organise their work so that they meet deadlines and avoid last minute rushing.
4. Parents should try to provide a suitable conditions for the completion of homework. The school has provided a set of guidelines for study/homework in the school journal.
5. Parents/Guardians should take an active role in their child's homework.

Assessment Policy

Definition:

The term "Assessment" refers generally to the gathering and interpretation of information related to a student's learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and learning needs.

Why assess?

Assessment is an essential part of good teaching and effective learning. In keeping with the school mission statement we seek to enable each child to develop to their full potential and assessment is one method of achieving this.

The schools policy on assessment is guided by the following legislation:

- The Education Act (1998)
- The Data Protection (Amendments) Act (2003)
- The Equal Status Act (2000)
- The Education (Welfare) Act (2000)
- The Education for persons with special Educational Needs Act (2004)
- The Freedom of Information Act (1997,2003)

Assessment can take place for the following reasons;

1. To monitor a student's progress and to provide the teacher with information.
2. To make decisions about what and how the student is learning. This information allows the teacher to identify the next steps in progressing the students learning and adapt her / his teaching strategies and / or learning activities as appropriate.
3. To provide the students and parents with information regarding progress and to encourage students to become actively involved in their own education.
4. To establish baseline data in relation to a student's attainments in certain subjects.
5. To identify appropriate student levels for Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle.
6. To assess a student's eligibility for additional support and services and to inform consultations with the NEPS psychologist where necessary.
7. To assist in the identification of students who may need to be referred to an outside professional or agency for assessment or direct intervention.
8. To provide students with valuable life skills which will enable them to lead fulfilling lives.

Types of Assessment

Formative Assessment

Definition:

Formative assessment involves a range of strategies designed to give both students, teachers and parents' feedback about students' understanding of elements of their learning in courses. Formative assessment uses the process of assessment to help learners improve their learning because it helps shape and guide the next steps of the learning process. It is about 'learning to learn'.

At St Patrick's College, teachers will strive to share the learning intentions of each lesson with their students and to highlight criteria for successful learning of subject matter.

These strategies involve the sharing of the learning intentions for all lessons and the sharing of the criteria for success in each lesson.

Teachers and their departments may use other AFL strategies from time to time to provide feedback to students on their learning. This is at the discretion of the individual teacher to adapt AFL strategies to suit the needs and demands of their particular subject.

Teachers also set regular homework in certain subject areas and comment on the quality of this work while making suggestions for improvement. In these instances, a comment only marking strategy is employed.

Finally, some forms of assessment will be differentiated to suit the needs and abilities of individual students.

Target Setting

From 2018, all senior cycle students will be asked to set targets for themselves in conjunction with their teachers and their parents/guardians. A copy of this target setting sheet is included in the appendices.

Summative Assessment

Definition:

Summative Assessment refers to the assessment of learning and aims to provide a summary of the achievements of the learner.

All years (except Transition Year) shall have House Examinations three times per year. Students will be assessed every eleven weeks. The schedule of House Examinations is as follows:

First Years; House Examinations will be held in Mid-November, Early March and the last week of May.

Second Years; House Examinations will be held in Mid-November, Early March and the last week of May.

Third Years; House Examinations will be held in Mid-November, Mock Examinations will be held in Early February. Mock Examinations are set and corrected externally. State Exams will be held in June.

Fifth Years; House Examinations will be held in Mid-November, Early March and the last week of May.

Sixth Years; House Examinations will be held in Mid-November, Mock Examinations will be held in Early February. Mock Examinations are set and corrected externally. State Exams will be held in June.

Attendance and participation in house exams is compulsory. Students who do not sit house exams must provide an adequate explanation (a medical cert if necessary) for non-attendance and will be asked to sit exams that have been missed before returning to normal class.

Informal Examinations

From time to time, e.g. the end of a chapter, a course section or a module, teachers may set informal examinations for their classes.

Transition Year students

Transition Year students do not sit any formal state or house exams in the school. Their Christmas and Summer Reports are based on continuous assessments in the classroom as determined by their individual subject teacher.

As Transition Year is focused on experiential learning and personal development, the forms of assessment used may vary from the standard practices used in other years. Transition Year assessments may involve the following: external certification, portfolio, project, oral presentation, multimedia, self and peer evaluation. This list is not exhaustive.

REPORTING

PRINCIPLES

Reporting is an important part of our relationship with parents and the wider community.

Reporting should communicate relevant and useful information and opinions to parents in a clear way.

PRACTICE

Teachers will record all marks in the mark book section of their Teacher Planner and/or electronically using VS Ware.

REPORTS

Reports are produced at different points throughout the academic year for various year groups. They are generated by VS Ware, which will be made available to staff both at school (and elsewhere through the secure School Network.)

Teachers will make a written comment per pupil per subject on annual reports.

Comments will be as detailed and constructive as possible. They should be as full as possible and state what a pupil can and cannot do and how far this matches potential.

Comments will be made on progress throughout the year and should not be confined to simply reporting on examination results.

Within the reporting schedule time is set aside for Year Head to read reports and comment on progress. Year Heads will read all reports produced in their Departments and ensure that they are of the expected quality.

All reports are signed off by the Principal and a general comment may be made on progress to date.

Every effort will be made to ensure special assistance for pupils with special educational needs. Readers/scribes and separate centres will be provided for those students where appropriate.

Psychometric Tests

The following assessment findings are sought from the 6th class primary school teachers at the transition from primary to post primary;

- Drumcondra Reasoning Test
- Drumcondra Reading Test Level 6

or

- SIGMA
- MICRA T

It is the policy of St Patrick's College to assess all incoming First Year students. This assessment shall take the form of the Cognitive Abilities Test Four (CAT 4) and shall be administered electronically. The New General Reading Test (NGRT) will also be used.

These assessments will be used by teachers to help guide their planning and help them with the identification of students with Special Educational Needs. The results of these tests shall be shared with First Year parents.

Fitness Testing

The Physical Education Department shall endeavour to hold/run fitness testing throughout the year in order to promote a healthy lifestyle among the school population.

Responsibilities

The School Management Team

1. The school management team will encourage a discussion about all of the components of assessment, recording and reporting.
2. Examine predictions of grades for Leaving Cert students and engage in discussions with students about these predictions. This may be the following; meetings with students, meetings with parents/guardians, phone calls to parents/guardians, informal conversations with students where necessary.
3. Analyse and evaluate state examination results and house exam results and engage subject departments in discussions about the implications of these results with respect to further developments in teaching and learning.
4. Continue to support, monitor and evaluate homework, assessment and reporting practices in the school.

Subject teachers

1. Provide students with regular formative feedback on the standard of their work, in line with agreed marking and assessment procedures.
2. Use assessment data to inform lesson planning, including differentiated activities to meet the identified needs of individual students.
3. Provide the Year Head and Senior Management where appropriate with a summary of student performance in relation to target level/grade in accordance with the Assessment and Reporting Policy.
4. Complete the relevant section of a full report on student performance to be published to parents in accordance with agreed procedures.
5. Become familiar with new assessment practices associated with their subject and new Junior Cycle, in particular The Framework for Junior Cycle guidelines on Classroom Based Assessments (CBA), Assessment Tasks (AT) and Subject Learning and Assessment Review Meetings (SLARs).

Tutors at Junior and Senior Cycle

1. Regularly check homework diaries and monitor pupils' progress.
2. Undertake initial examination of the quality of the comments made by subject staff on the reports. Appropriate action should be taken where there is cause for concern or when the content is excellent.

Year Heads

1. Undertake periodic examination of pupils' written work and liaise closely with the school management team on issues related to assessment, recording and especially reporting. Follow-up work will take place where standards are poor or excellent.
2. Undertake further examination of the content of the pupils' reports and liaise with the tutor where there is cause for concern or when the content is excellent.
3. Undertake examination of the quality of the comments made by staff on the reports. Appropriate action should be taken where there is cause for concern or when the content is excellent.

Students

1. Take responsibility for their own learning through self-assessment.
2. Work towards achieving agreed target levels/grades.

Parents

Support and encourage their child's learning by working in partnership with the school, e.g. attending parent/teacher meetings, monitoring homework, having some familiarity with the school's Reporting Timetable and Assessment Calendar.

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Monitoring and Follow –Up Procedures

The following methods are used to monitor this policy;

1. Class tutors and Year Heads regularly check their pupil's journals. Amongst other things this can show:

Parental involvement – they are asked to sign the diary every week.

Organizational problems, e.g. a pupil may be given too many tests in the same week. A tutor may be able to avoid repetition of this in the future by liaising with the subject teachers.

2. Spot checks are undertaken by each Year Head to ascertain how well the various policies concerned with assessment/recording and reporting are being implemented.

3. Each staff meeting/year group meeting has an agenda item concerned with 'pupils'. Those pupils causing concern as well as those who are excelling are discussed.

4. Each subject meeting has an agenda item concerned with the 'scheme of work'. This allows Tutors to share their successes and failures in teaching the course.

5. During meetings between Year Heads and Tutors, issues related to recording and reporting are discussed.

Review Procedure

This Homework, Assessment and Reporting Policy will be reviewed annually by the SDP Team in consultation with teaching staff and all other relevant partners for ratification by the Board of Management.

Formal Adoption of the Homework, Assessment and Reporting Policy by the Board of Management of St Patrick's College.

Appendix 1

Target Setting Template for Leaving Certificate Cycle Students

Student Name:		
Teacher:		
Subject:		
Junior Cycle Result:		
	Grade	Comment
Current Level		
Last Grade		
Predicted level		
How can I improve?		
Student Signature		Date:
Teacher Signature		Date:
Parent Signature		Date: