

Homework Policy



ST JOSEPH SCHOOL

BLATA L-BAJDA



This document lays out the aims, principles and rules for Homework at St Joseph School, Blata l-Bajda.

It was formulated by the Senior Management Team, Teachers and Learning Support Assistants.

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This policy applies to all stakeholders in our secondary school, namely, the students, parents/guardians, teachers, LSAs and SMT.

As a school we believe that homework is important because

- it helps students make the most of their experience in school;
- it can be useful in reinforcing what has been learnt in class;
- it prepares students for upcoming lessons;
- it encourages a sense of responsibility;
- it helps students develop positive study habits.

Relationship to the school's Mission/Vision/Aims

It is based on St Joseph School's current mission statement with emphasis on the aim "to give our girls a holistic education, developing their individual, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, creative and physical potential to the full".

Rationale

The policy is necessary because

- it provides guidelines to all stakeholders;
- it clarifies the school's expectations as regards homework;
- it complements class work and helps the student check whether she has understood the topics covered in class;
- it helps students acquire self-discipline in doing tasks which are given to promote learning;
- it assists teachers in assessing progress and planning lessons;
- it promotes independent learning and fosters study skills for life-long learning;
- it encourages creativity.

Objectives

The policy intends

- to motivate the students to enable them to produce regular and better quality homework;
- to create a fairer system for all;
- to promote homework as an instrument for formative assessment which provides feedback to the students which in turn helps them to identify areas in which they excel and areas in need of improvement;
- to encourage parents/guardians to provide practical support and to share in the responsibility of their daughter's progress;
- to set standard sanctions for all students who do not adhere to the policy.

Definition of Homework

Homework is an assignment or task done at home which serves either as an introduction to, or a follow-up activity of work done at school. Homework is not restricted to written tasks only but can include reading, research, revision and the organisation of files amongst others.

Workload and Timeframes

- The amount and frequency of homework should be at the discretion of the subject teacher according to the nature of the work, or the age and the ability of the student. However subject teachers can co-ordinate the amount and frequency of homework given per Form.
- The deadline to hand in the homework should be realistic and related to the task assigned.

- In special circumstances the teacher or LSA can negotiate the deadline with the student in order to encourage more co-operation. In such a case the deadline should be strictly respected.

Responsibilities

The Senior Management Team shall

- distribute a copy of the policy to all stakeholders and also publish it on the website;
- ensure that homework is given regularly by teachers in order to fulfil the purposes listed above;
- when deemed necessary, collect homework or school diary for inspection;
- be an active link between the teacher and parents to look into the reasons why students are having difficulties adhering to the Homework Policy or to discuss any problems that may arise regarding homework;
- inform the teaching staff of any special cases where the homework policy does not hold, as well as the duration of this exemption;
- monitor the correct and consistent implementation of sanctions as specified in the discipline policy.

Teachers shall

- implement the homework policy following rules which have been agreed upon;
- assign homework with moderation and establish realistic deadlines;
- set regular homework to help students establish a home study routine;
- explain clearly the homework being given, the purpose of the homework, and the due date for the homework whilst making sure that the students are aware of what is expected of them and how they are to be assessed;

- return the homework assigned within a reasonable time so that feedback is more effective; (class and peer correction is not to be ruled out, as long as valid feedback is given to the students by the teacher and any LSAs in class can assist and monitor the class throughout class correction sessions);
- keep a record of the homework assigned, the date when it was assigned, and the names of the students who fail to give it in;
- give feedback regarding homework by either remarking verbally or in writing, by offering positive support and reinforcement for completed homework or by discussing any point/s not understood by students, either on an individual or on a class basis;
- work in conjunction with LSAs to ensure that the work set is within the ability of the student/s in their care;
- inform the SMT of any students who struggle to adhere to the homework policy.

Learning Support Assistants shall

- liaise with the teachers with regard to the different needs of individual students;
- in collaboration with the teacher, adapt homework and tasks according to the student's specific needs;
- clarify instructions given by the teacher according to the student's needs and ensure that this is noted down in the student's school diary together with the deadline when the homework is to be submitted;
- notify parents accordingly in case of missing or incomplete homework.

Students shall

- sign and follow the school's Homework Policy;
- ensure that homework is correctly recorded in their school diary which must be brought to school every day;
- ensure that homework is handwritten unless it is the wish of the teacher to have it printed in which case, the homework should be printed at home;
- read and carry out adequate revision prior to undertaking the homework assigned so as to ensure that it is done to the best of their abilities;
- start their homework in good time so that any difficulties can be discussed before the deadline;
- hand in complete homework done to the best of their ability rather than homework that is incomplete or hastily done since the assessment mark of all homework is included in the exam report;
- avoid plagiarism or 'copy and paste' from any other source;
- acknowledge research work and list down references that direct the teacher to the source of the information given or quoted;
- refrain from using translations from Google and other sites from the internet;
- do all homework assigned whether written or otherwise;
- avail themselves of the opportunity of engaging in healthy discussion with their teacher regarding the formative assessment given after their homework is corrected;
- accept the consequences when homework is not handed in;
- be aware of their own responsibility and take the initiative to ensure that their homework is ready for submission on the date specified by the teacher when they return to school after a period of absence;
- catch up with the work missed during a period of absence.

Parents/Guardians shall

- confirm by means of their signature that they have read the homework policy document with their children and are prepared to abide by the rules included therein;
- provide a physical environment that is conducive to homework and learning;
- ensure that the homework is actually being done;
- encourage their children to organise their time and take responsibility for their learning;
- help their children to complete tasks by discussing key questions or directing them to resources but shall NOT do their homework for them; they may however, check the homework for completeness and neatness;
- guide the students towards acquiring a sense of responsibility and understanding the consequences of missing homework rather than excusing their failure to abide by rules;
- comply with the teacher's request when asked to sign any notifications regarding missing homework; (the parent's/guardian's signature shall not be regarded as a sign of approval or otherwise but simply a form of acknowledgement);
- contact the SMT or the relevant teacher by appointment, to discuss any concerns about the homework immediately a problem arises;
- support the school when corrective measures are taken to address issues related to homework irregularities.

Sanctions

- If homework is handed in late to the teacher concerned without a valid reason, no assessment mark is given when it is corrected.

Where necessary, notes addressed to parents about missing or unacceptable homework are passed on to the students to be signed by the parents.

- If homework is not handed in by the given date, it has to be handed in on the following day, signed by the parents.
- In the case of failure to bring homework, it is at the teacher's discretion to detain the student after school.