

HOMEWORK POLICY

Mission Statement:

St. Michael's College is a voluntary Catholic secondary school under the trusteeship of Des Places Education Association whose core values are inclusive of The Congregation of the Holy Spirit (The Spiritans) philosophy of education. We welcome, care for and support all within the school community through the promotion of:-

- Respect
- Being just and responsible
- Quality teaching and learning
- An inclusive community
- Life-long learning

Spiritan Philosophy of Education

Inspired by the vision of Claude Poullart des Places and Frances Libermann, Spiritan Education is committed to holistic development and to the achievement of the full potential of each student, particularly those who are disadvantaged or marginalised.

It is a process informed and influenced by the teaching and example of Jesus Christ and is conducted in an atmosphere of care, respect and joy. The Spiritans are committed to on-going whole-school development in collaboration and partnership with the Board of Management, staff, parents and the wider community.

Operating Context

A Board of Management operates St. Michael's College within the following guidelines:

1. In the context of, and within the parameters of Department of Education and Science (D.E.S.) regulations and programmes;
2. Within the rights of the Trustees as set out in the Education Act;
3. Following the Religious and Educational Philosophy of the Spiritans;
4. Within the funding and resource available.

This policy is consistent with the Mission Statement and aims of the school.

Generally homework is the carrying out of work assigned by the class teacher outside of school hours at home privately or at supervised study after school. Homework includes ongoing and regular revision of course work.

Rationale

In St. Michael's College homework is seen as an essential part of the teaching and learning process and as such is a vital support to work done with pupils in the classroom. The setting and regular marking of homework will enhance pupils' academic achievement. Thus the subject teachers in this school plan and design the work to be done at home as an integral part of the topic being taught in the classroom.

Goals

The purpose of homework is to enable the student to develop the necessary and important skills required for examinations and to be thoroughly familiar with the course content of various subjects.

Homework amplifies and reinforces the work covered by the teacher in class and confirms the student's ease or difficulty with a particular aspect of the course. Revision done on a continuous basis reduces exam stress and keeps the student up to date with his/her work.

Other goals

- To ensure consistent approaches to the setting and reviewing of homework.
- To help teachers to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of particular students and to indicate where improvements could be made.
- To assess / evaluate and record progress of students.
- To encourage students to work independently, to organise and make proper use of their time and to develop good study habits.
- To revise and reinforce work done in class.
- To enhance student achievements.
- To give students the opportunity, on occasions to carry out research on their own.
- To encourage parents to take an interest in and share responsibility for their child's work and progress.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management

- To ensure policy is drawn up, developed and evaluated from time to time.
- To approve policy and support its implementation.
- To receive reports on implementation.

Principal, Deputy Principal and Senior Management

- To support and monitor the implementation of policy.
- To support the development of students study skills.

Staff

Teachers see the importance of meaningful and appropriate homework. Student achievement rises significantly when teachers regularly give homework and students conscientiously do it.

- To develop and implement policy, assign, review regular homework, provide feedback to students and record homework set.
- Lay out expectations.
- Make homework clear.
- Encourage and teach good study habits.
- Provide constructive feedback.
- Give praise and motivate.
- Give help as needed.
- Communicate with parents.
- Show respect for students.

Parent's Role

Parents have an important supervisory role in ensuring that homework is carried out regularly, carefully and without distraction.

- Provide necessary support, encouragement for completion of homework.
- Check homework journals, if applicable.
- Provide suitable conditions for homework.
- See that adequate time is spent on homework and that homework is completed.
- Contact school if there are difficulties with homework.

Students

It is recommended that each student have a homework diary in class at all times. All homework assignments should be recorded at the end of each class and entered into the diary. The school diary is seen as a schoolbook and not a personal diary.

- Responsibility lies with students to do homework, present it properly and co-operate with the teacher.
- Students are required to complete projects carefully and on time.
- Junior students should devote at least two hours and senior students at least three hours daily to homework.
- Transition Year students are expected to adhere to deadlines set for work.

Special Needs

In setting homework for students with special needs teachers are encouraged to balance the right of students to share fully in the work of the class, including homework tasks, with their individual learning needs. These needs may include consolidation and reinforcement of specific skills. For some students, the continuing involvement of parents is very valuable. Subject teachers will collaborate where possible with Learning Support teachers to ensure class tasks are manageable, and individual skill practice can be incorporated without overloading the students.

Content

- Homework consists of written oral and revision work. A balanced approach is necessary.
- Students with special needs will be given due consideration.
- Students will be given direction and help in homework / study skills.
- Students are encouraged to draw up study timetable - length of time required will vary with age/level.
- Homework to be done carefully and consistently. Copied or carelessly done work is not acceptable.
- Homework late at night is not recommended.
- Weekend jobs are not to be recommended or encouraged, particularly during exam years.
- If for any valid reason a student has been unable to do homework, an explanatory note / letter is required and appreciated.
- Parents will be informed if pupils do not do homework.

Performance Criteria

The effectiveness of this policy will be judged by :-

- Whether goals are achieved
- Good quality homework is being presented

Monitoring

- Teachers report to parents, if homework is not being done.
- Subject teachers aim to promote a positive and active attitude towards homework.
- Subject teachers liaise with Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal and Principal as appropriate.
- Principal reports to Board of Management.

Review

Reviewed as part of overall policy review after two years.