

Ballyhaunis Community School



Homework Policy

Ratified by the Board of Management on: _____

Signature: _____
(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Commenced:	September 2024
Next review due:	September 2026

Introduction

Homework plays a vital role in reinforcing classroom learning, helping students develop independent study habits, and preparing them for future educational challenges. This policy outlines the guidelines for students, teachers, and parents in relation to homework in Ballyhaunis Community School, and provides recommended time allocations based on the year group of the student.

Purpose of Homework

- Homework is designed to reinforce and consolidate what students have learned in the classroom.
- Homework is seen as essential in preparing students for state exams, particularly the Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate.
- It helps students to progress through learning outside the classroom.
- It allows students to develop the practice of independent learning without the constant presence of the teacher or other students and the external discipline of the timetable. This way of working is vital at the later stages of secondary education and thereafter.
- Homework can provide the quiet conditions needed for creative and thoughtful work of all kinds.
- It allows students to use materials and other sources of information that are not always available in the classroom.
- It involves parents/guardians and others in students' work for their mutual benefit.
- It encourages opportunities for long-term research and other work.
- It forms an important part of students' notes.
- It gives students valuable experience of working to deadlines.
- It forms a link with the study techniques, crucial to success at secondary school.
- It enables teachers to evaluate students' work and to assess its standard.
- It can help with preparatory work for the next day's class.
- Learning is strongly reinforced if students revise in the evening what was learnt during the day.

Types of Homework:

Each subject department sets assignments which are specific to its particular subject area. Homework can include the following types of activity:

- Development of oral skills.
- Writing of essays/articles/speeches/short stories/dialogues/poems/podcasts, etc.

- Learning by rote.
- Listening to and/or viewing radio, TV programmes, video, podcast or use of the internet.
- Drawing and illustrating.
- Making notes.
- Reviewing.
- Reading for pleasure.
- Reading for information and memorising.
- Preparation of presentations.
- Making a model to exemplify an item of work.
- Practice of exam techniques.
- Research.
- Revision.

Guidelines for Students

1. **Completing Homework:** Students are responsible for completing all homework assigned, ensuring it is done to the best of their ability and submitted on time. When absent from class due to school activities it is the responsibility of the student to find out what work has been assigned and to complete it.
2. **Organising Work:** Students are given a homework journal at the beginning of the year. They must record homework on the page assigned to the day when it was set and also should note the day when the homework is due. Students are expected to plan their homework so that assignments do not accumulate.
3. **Time Management:** It's important to manage time effectively to balance schoolwork with extracurricular activities, ensuring adequate rest and recreation.
4. **Seeking Help:** If students encounter difficulties, they are encouraged to seek clarification from teachers or parents and not leave tasks unfinished or misunderstood.
5. **Study Environment:** Students should try to complete homework in a quiet, well-lit space free from distractions.
6. **Break Tasks into Manageable Parts:** students should break down large assignments into smaller, manageable sections.
7. **Avoid Delay:** Students should aim to complete homework as early as possible after it is assigned, leaving time to ask questions if they encounter difficulties.
8. **Quality Over Quantity:** The emphasis should always be on the quality of the work completed, not just the amount of time spent.

9. **Use Technology Wisely:** While technology can be a valuable resource for research and learning, it should not become a distraction during homework time. Work completed must be students own authentic work and not plagiarised.
10. **Correcting homework:** Students may be involved in correcting their own homework under direction from the teacher, as this is a good learning experience. Peer assessment and other Assessment for Learning strategies may be used by teachers. Students should make all necessary corrections to their work and seek clarity from their teacher if they experience any difficulties.
11. **Non completion of Homework:** In the event of homework not being completed/incomplete students must have an explanatory note from a parent/guardian dated and signed in his/her journal. The note must be presented to all relevant teachers.

Guidelines for Teachers

1. **Assigning Homework:** Homework should be purposeful, reinforce learning from class, and be manageable within the recommended time for each year group.
2. **Clear instructions:** Teachers should ensure that instructions concerning homework are clear to everyone in the class, and allow time for students to record homework in the student journal. Homework is written on the board for first year students to record.
3. **Differentiation:** Teachers should consider the varying abilities of students when assigning homework, providing support or extension activities as necessary.
4. **Monitoring and Feedback:** Teachers should regularly check homework for completion and quality. Constructive feedback should be provided to help students improve.
5. **Balance:** Teachers should be mindful of deadlines to ensure students are not overwhelmed with excessive homework/project work from different subjects.
6. **Promoting Study Skills:** Teachers should encourage good study practices, time management, and independent learning strategies through homework tasks.
7. **Non completion of Homework:** Teachers should examine each case of non-presentation of homework on an individual basis. In the first instance teachers should apply their own sanction and thereafter communicate with Parents/guardians via a note in the student's journal. Persistent cases should be recorded on VShare and referred to the relevant Year Head.

Guidelines for Parents

1. **Support and Supervision:** Parents should encourage a positive attitude toward homework and provide a supportive environment, such as a quiet space for study.
2. **Monitoring:** Parents should routinely monitor their students journal to ensure homework is being recorded and completed. Paying particular attention to any issues

which the teacher has raised in the notes section in connection with homework and support the student in addressing these issues

3. **Encouraging Independence:** While parents can offer help, it is important that students complete their homework independently to foster personal responsibility and growth.
4. **Communicating with Teachers:** If a student is struggling with homework, parents should communicate any concerns to the teachers, ensuring any issues are addressed.
5. **Balancing Activities:** Parents should help students strike a balance between homework, extracurricular activities, and rest to avoid burnout.
6. **Time Management Encouragement:** Parents should encourage students to follow a consistent homework routine and not leave tasks to the last minute.

Recommended Time Allocations for Homework

The following are recommended guidelines for the amount of time students should spend on homework. These are approximate and may vary based on the student's pace, upcoming exams, or project work.

- **1st Year:**
1-1.5 hours per night. Homework should focus on developing study habits, reinforcing class learning, and building a strong foundation for future study.
- **2nd Year:**
1.5-2 hours per night. Homework becomes more subject-focused, and students are expected to manage a slightly higher workload.
- **3rd Year:**
2-3 hours per night. As students prepare for the Junior Cycle exams, homework will include exam preparation, revision, and project work.
- **Transition Year:**
While the focus in Transition Year is often on experiential learning and project-based work, homework may involve research, personal projects, or light academic work.
- **5th Year:**
2-3 hours per night. With the start of the Senior Cycle, students are expected to manage a heavier workload and engage in more independent study.
- **6th Year:**
3-3.5 hours per night. In preparation for the Leaving Certificate exams, students should focus on exam papers, revision, and additional study outside of assigned homework.