

## ***Curragh Post Primary School***

### **Introduction and Scope of this Policy:**

This document sets out the policy of Curragh Post Primary School in respect of the procedures and practices that the school wishes to advise students to follow with regard to homework and study.

### **Relationship to school's Mission / Vision / Aims:**

Curragh Post Primary School's Mission Statement is as follows:

***Our School values the gifts and talents of students and staff in their development in an atmosphere of equity, caring and mutual respect. Can we achieve this? Yes, we can. Is Feidir Linn.***

This Homework and Study Policy is another important framework within which “the development of whole people, empowered to lead effective lives in the wider society” is enhanced in our school. The dignity of each student, staff member and parent / guardian is honoured and reflected in school policies and structures, including this policy.

This policy is informed by the school's Mission Statement which commits us to preparing all students for the challenges of adolescent and adult life and to respecting the dignity, worth and individuality of every member of the school community. The school's role in the development of young people supports and is enriched by the active participation of teachers and parents / guardians in many aspects of students' lives.

### **Rationale:**

This Homework and Study Policy aims to ensure that appropriate opportunities and procedures are in place to enable the school

- to offer a quality and holistic education to our students;
- to ensure that the education programme is supported by the homework and study carried out by all students;
- to ensure that the students are supported in their homework and independent study;
- to ensure that parents / guardians are as fully informed as possible about homework and study of all students.

### **Goals:**

The school shall have in place appropriate means and processes

- to inform students about the best way to complete homework and to study;
- to inform parents / guardians about the homework and study of their children in the school;
- to involve parents / guardians in the homework and study of their children; and, ultimately,
- to support the role of parents / guardians as the primary educators.

### **What is Homework?**

Homework forms an essential part of effective pupil learning and, therefore, it should be given serious consideration by pupils, parents and teachers alike. Homework may take the form of learning, study / revision as well as both oral and written work.

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### **Why do we give Homework?**

It is our policy, as teachers, to give homework to every class we teach. Reasons why we give homework include:

- It is essential for the student in order for him/her to practice the skills of reading, writing and learning.
- Homework is a re-enforcement of the work done in class. It provides an assessment for both pupils and teachers as to whether or not and how well the work has been understood.
- It helps teachers to identify mistakes and learning difficulties. It helps students to learn from their mistakes and identify their difficulties.
- It affords students the opportunity to work on their own and take responsibility for their learning.
- It forms a crucial part of exam preparation.

All students must treat homework as an important part of school life. It demands time and attention when classes for the day have ended.

### **Homework - Things to do:**

#### *Homework - Things to do for Teachers:*

Ensure that students place their school diary / homework journal, open, in the top right hand corner of the desk at the start of every class.

Give homework in every class and indicate to students the average amount of time this work should take.

Monitor diaries / journals in every class.

Write homework on the board for students to note it.

Give the last two minutes of class to ensure homework is recorded.

Check homework every day – ensure date, page and title is on every entry.

Correct homework regularly and date the corrections.

#### *Homework - Things to do for Students:*

Students should remember that all subjects are equally important in state exams; therefore, all subjects require full attention.

### ***In School***

Students must bring the official school diary / homework journal, which they will be given in September, to class. It should be placed, open, in the top right hand corner of the desk. Paying full attention in class is a minimum requirement and makes homework easier to complete. Students must record all their homework, both oral and written. All homework must be presented to the teacher as required on the specified date.

### ***At Home***

Students should try to do their homework:

- At a definite, fixed time each day.
- As soon as is realistically possible after arriving home.
- In a warm, well lit, quiet room, with no distractions from television, stereo or other people.
- On the night it is given. This is particularly important where a period of days elapses between the assignment being given and presentation dates, e.g. work given on Monday to be handed up on Thursday. Students should be encouraged to do such work as early as possible.
- No later than 10.00 p.m. on weekdays and 8.00 p.m. on Sundays.
- All students should take a full day off at weekends.

### **How long should students spend on Homework?**

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It is our experience that students who pay full attention to homework do better in exams than those who don't. As part of the students' daily routine, we suggest that the following average time limits are guidelines for students and parents alike:

Year	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	5th	6th
Hours	1- 1.5	2 – 2.5	2.5 - 3	3	3 – 3.5

On the basis that 1<sup>st</sup> year students are recommended to do 1 – 1.5 hours work at home, individual assignments should, on average, take 15 minutes (pro rata for other years).

All students should note the advice provided in relation to homework and study by all subject departments (See Appendix 1 attached).

### ***Other Points to Note:***

- Exam classes can expect to be assigned normal homework or revision over holiday periods and mid-term breaks. This work will be written and will take on average the following length of time:

	<b><u>3<sup>rd</sup> Years</u></b>	<b><u>6<sup>th</sup> Years</u></b>
<i>Halloween Break</i>	1- 2 Hours	2- 3 Hours
<i>Christmas Break</i>	1- 2 Hours	2- 3 Hours
<i>February Mid Term</i>	<i>No work will be assigned</i>	
<i>Easter Break</i>	2- 3 Hours	3- 5 Hours

This work is the minimum standard required. Students should be setting their own standards higher, especially those with aspirations to do very well and achieve the highest grades possible.

- Non-exam classes will not be assigned homework or revision over holiday periods and mid-term breaks.
- Revision / Note taking: Students should always revise for examinations by reading the relevant textbook with a pen in hand, making notes. The notes, written in the student's own words, should, then, be understood and memorised.

### **What can Parents / Guardians do?**

The school is a supportive organisation in respect of the primary educators – parents / guardians. Our efforts to provide holistic education, in its various forms, are most meaningful and effective when parents / guardians both understand and support our aims and activities. Parents / guardians should work with the school to emphasise the importance of homework and study. They should check the student's diary / journal to ensure that homework is recorded and, then, should look at the student's copies to ensure it is completed. Parents / guardians can create the climate at home, quiet room, no distractions, fixed time each day, etc. to ensure homework can be fully done, as required by the school.

*These Guidelines on homework and study are intended to assist pupils, teachers and parents / guardians. They should not be regarded as absolute, but should be used flexibly.*

### **Review Procedures:**

The policy will be reviewed regularly and by the Board of Management every four years. Any staff member who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a

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review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible. The Parents' Council may request a formal review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible by the Board of Management.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_ [date]

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***Review Date: February 2017***

**Advice re: Homework and Study from Subject Departments**

**Homework and Study Policy**

**What key things would you ask students to watch out for that are specific to your subject area while studying and completing homework?**

English

- Analyse the key words in questions (underline the key words) and know exactly what you are being asked;
- Use the textbook for information – do not rely simply on memory;
- Be aware of using P.Q.E. – Point, Quote and Explain – when doing written work in response to a text;
- Focus on grammar and punctuation;
- Reading homework can be as valuable as written work;
- Understand key words and concepts;
- Re-read all work before handing up, don't just scan it, read and correct;
- Read over your teacher's corrections and comments and try to improve future work by applying these corrections.

Maths

- Having the appropriate materials;
  - Textbook;
  - Copy;
  - Log Book (when needed);
  - Calculator;
  - Pencil, ruler, etc.;
  - Graph copy (when needed);
  - Note book for formulae.
- Homework journal opened with detailed account of homework written in;
- Exam papers for exam classes;
- Read the question a few times;
- Try the question and look up examples done in class to help;
- Check answer in back of book and see where you went wrong and try to correct it;;
- Make note of or clearly mark questions that you have difficulty with when studying and doing homework;
- Don't give up on questions too easily – use text book, look back at examples done in class;
- Don't leave gaps, try something.

Irish

- Sample answers;
- Text book;
- Notes;
- Exam papers for exam classes;
- Grammar notes;
- Dictionary.

Always read over what was done in class. Make a note of anything you need explained again;  
Rewrite any corrections taken from the board in your copy;

Keep a dictionary;

Always attend to oral work and learning off – this is just as important as written work.

C.S.P.E.

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- Focus on the Seven Concepts, Current Affairs, Watch the News / programmes on T.V., Look out for newspapers at home, headlines, cuttings, developments in your villages, towns, communities, etc;
- Learn key words and their meanings;
- Use the textbook for information – do not rely simply on memory;
- Re-read all work before handing up, don't just scan it, read and correct.

#### **Home Economics**

- Realise the importance of using and being familiar with;
  - Textbook;
  - Exam papers;
  - Related topics on the syllabus;
  - Teacher's notes;
  - Handouts;
  - New Words;
  - Internet sites;
  - Materials;
  - Processes;
  - Safe practice;
  - Exam layout;
  - Relevant TV programmes;
  - Maintaining a folder;
  
- Layout and planning of written and drawing work;
- Layout and planning of practical work;
- Understanding the importance of feedback given on homework and tests.

All key definitions should be written in the back of your notes copy.

#### **Technical Drawing, Woodwork**

- Realise the importance of using and being familiar with;
  - Textbook;
  - Exam papers;
  - Related topics on the syllabus;
  - Teacher's notes;
  - Handouts;
  - Internet sites;
  - Materials;
  - Processes;
  - Safe practice;
  - Exam layout;
  - Relevant TV programmes;
  - Maintaining a folder;
  
- Read the question fully and understand what you are being asked;
- Familiarise yourself with the questions and the notes and then answer the question in your own words;
- Layout and planning of written and drawing work;
- Layout and planning of practical work;
- Understanding the importance of feedback given on homework and tests.
- Examples / extra information is available from everyday life, current and past documentaries available from R.T.E., public libraries, internet, YouTube, etc.

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- Get involved in appropriate work around the home that will enable you to develop your skills or investigate ongoing projects.

### Art

- A4 sketch pad;
- Pencils and oil pastels;
- For art history a textbook / notes and exam papers.

Spend time stated on Homework List on Homework exercises;  
Keep going, even if the task is difficult;  
Careful, slow observation of object being drawn is what is required;  
Sign and date work on end of page, neatly.  
Work should look finished and be done to the best of your ability.

### Business / Accounting / LCVP / Science

- Copy / A4 Pad / graph paper;
- Textbooks / workbooks;
- Notes / lab. Copy;
- Exam papers;
- Calculator / memory stick;
- Portfolio / lab. Copy.

Include relevant examples in your answers;  
Follow the step by step process of the exam.

### Languages (French)

- Have all resources at hand:
  - Textbook;
  - Dictionary;
  - Hardback;
  - Exam papers and CD.
- Read questions carefully and give comprehensive answers;
- Note new vocabulary, spellings, gender of nouns, etc. and revise regularly;
- Take note of problem areas;
- If questioned in English – answer in English;
- If questioned in French – answer in the same;
- Always check homework before submitting to teacher;
- Don't give up too easily – PERSEVERE – use all resources to help you answer the question.

### Humanities (History, Geography)

- Importance of key terms / specific vocabulary;
- Using copies / notes – ready to hand;
- Read and re-read questions very carefully – review question when answer is completed;
- Learn to summarise in student's own words;
- Use capital letters for the names of people and places;
- Use time to learn new information;
- Keep all work neat, presentable and structured;
- Use paragraphs when constructing long answers – especially Leaving Cert. Classes;
- Use past exam papers and, if necessary, follow marking scheme and S.R.P. (significant relevant points).

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**How do you feel as a subject Department that homework should be completed in your particular subject area?**

### English:

- Be aware that homework may comprise of written work, reading and / or research;
- Work should always be titled, dated and presented neatly;
- Students should concentrate on writing the required amounts stated by the teacher;
- Students (particularly exam classes) should time themselves when completing questions from the exam papers.

### Maths

- Homework must be fully completed and presented for class in maths copy – NOT ON PAGES;
- All workings must be shown – answer only will not do;
- Date your homework;
- Rule pages;
- Present tidy work;
- Graphs should be done in pencil;
- All questions should be attempted using examples done in class or using textbook;
- Blank spaces won't get marks.
- Revise chapters before end of chapter tests.

### Irish

- Where there is a longer written answer required, do a rough draft first;
- Dated, page number, headings and be legible;
- Fully completed with care and presented on the relevant day in class;
- Time set aside nightly for oral homework in vocabulary and grammar;
- If learning off vocabulary, etc. Return to it a few times, rather than sitting looking at it for ages.

### C.S.P.E.

- Do Active Homework – e.g. collect newspaper cuttings, watch local, national and international news / reports / programmes on T.V., Look out for developments in your villages, towns, communities, e.g. tidy towns, recycling, town hall, charities, etc;
- Learn key words and their meanings;
- Use the textbook for information – do not rely simply on memory;
- Re-read all work before handing up, don't just scan it, read and correct.

### Home Economics, Technical Drawing, Woodwork

- Completed on time and in the relevant copy, etc.;
- Clear and well presented i.e. labels, colour / shading for diagrams etc.;
- Diagrams should be used in every answer;
- Practice drawings;
- Over reliance on the textbook is discouraged;
- Read questions carefully, research the answer, preferably with internet / notes, newspapers;
- Study case studies;
- Complete as many questions as possible with the textbook closed;
- Practice past exam type questions and projects, including investigation, research and design.

### Art

- Homework should be completed to the best of your ability and the time required by each year group should be adhered to.

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- Practical homework is best completed in a well lit room as a break from written work;
- Homework should be completed in an A4 sketchpad and should be signed and dated;
- In art history questions, clear sketches are necessary and practice is essential in answering these;
- Organisation is very important and having all the relevant materials at hand.

### **Business / Accounting / LCVP / Science**

- Learning should be done each night on what was covered in class that day;
- Revise your notes over an extended period of time. This will help your retention of knowledge;
- Develop your skills by attempting the relevant exercises given by the teacher;
- Full sentences should be written for all questions – no abbreviations and workings to be clearly shown;
- Practice drawing large clearly labelled diagrams;
- Experiments are to be written up on the day done in class;
- Homework should be of the appropriate standard, dated, labelled and completed on time. It should be printed out if required.

### **Languages: French**

- Homework should be done in a suitable environment – no distractions;
- Learning homework is as important as written homework;
- Read questions carefully and give full answers;
- All homework should have:
  - Margin;
  - Date;
  - Title;
  - Page;
  - Number of question.
- Students (especially Senior level) should plan answers – use rough sheets;
- Students should test themselves at the end of each homework session;
  - Look: look carefully at word for 10 – 15 seconds;
  - Say: say word out loud to yourself;
  - Cover: cover word when you feel you know it;
  - Write: write the word;
  - Check: check to see if word is correct.

### **Humanities (History, Geography)**

- Complete work on time – follow journal;
- Ensure all materials needed are available;
- Structure homework – neat, legible and to the best of his / her ability;
- Use key concepts (e.g. propaganda) in your answer;
- Be in a suitable environment for an appropriate length of time;
- Use time to catch up on notes / learning.

**How do you feel as a subject Department that study should be carried out in your specific subject area?**

### **English**

- It is necessary to refer back to the structure of the piece of work (essay, letter, report, diary, etc.);

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- Samples are always given so you should study the sample before writing your own individual answers;
- Pay attention to teachers' comments on your work so that you can improve and not make the same mistakes;
- Stick as closely as possible to revision timetable.

### **Maths**

- Do examples and work through extra examples in the book (revision exercises, etc.);
- Revise relevant formulae and keep revising these;
- Use of exam papers for exam classes – do as many questions as you can and keep repeating them;
- Must be active – do not just look at question – do it out fully;
- Use study / revision plan given to you by the teacher;
- Test yourself using test questions at end of each chapter or select random questions from chapter and do out again for revision;
- Read over corrected errors in previous exams, etc.;
- If unsure – ask your teacher for clarification but don't give up too easily yourself.

### **Irish**

- Learn from the corrections in your copy and rewrite them;
- Test yourself on vocabulary, lists, etc.;
- Look through your work and note if you tend to repeat the same mistakes – if so, correct this habit;
- Revision work set in relation to topics and chapters covered in various exercises including written, oral and aural;
- In the case of longer tests, etc. make a list of the key words and reconstruct the information / answer verbally and in writing a number of times.

### **C.S.P.E.**

- Learn key words and their meanings and
- Focus on the seven Concepts.

### **Home Economics, Technical Drawing, Woodwork**

- Students should expect tests on revision work throughout the year;
- Practice drawing diagrams;
- Match diagrams to experiments and know experiment outcomes;
- Class notes = concise revision. These notes should be read over every night regardless of any other work given;
- Textbook = broader revision;
- Exam papers and revision questions should be used for studying purposes;
- Students should test themselves i.e. revise – select an exam question – time themselves – correct the question;
- Investigation, research and design – Practice and reinforcement of detailed drawings – excellent transferrable skills opportunity;
- Be aware of time management.

### **Art**

- If homework is done well and regularly, it is as good as study.
- Studying should be done before class tests (average monthly) at the end of each topic – this gives students and teacher and parents / guardians an idea of how much study / good quality homework is actually being undertaken by students.

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- Study should be completed in blocks e.g. Early Renaissance Europe / Pre-Christian Ireland, etc.;
- Dates, main country / city – what defined the movement and the main artists are important;
- Text book and notes should be used;
- Revision / study is best completed by making your own notes and attempting past examination papers;
- There is no substitute for daily practice at home while working towards a focused individual programme for the examination;
- Refer at all times on a regular nightly basis to the folder of exercises and class samples.

#### **Business / Accounting / LCVP / Science**

- Regular revision and practice is essential;
- Practice; Practice; Practice - Repeat questions a number of times – this will allow for step by step processes to be identified, understood and learned;
- Students should regularly test themselves on questions from the text book and exam papers Don't just look over questions, re-do them!;
- Re-write notes from notes copy;
- Rote learning essential for definitions / terms and experiments;
- Use concept maps / make up your own questions;
- Use Index cards with definitions / experiments / link words;
- Revise on a regular basis from the start of an examination year;
- Re-read your Portfolio regularly and familiarise yourself with key words / terms related to LCVP;
- In all disciplines it is very important to be aware of cross curricular links.

#### **Languages: French**

- Study in a suitable environment;
- Constant revision of classwork to include vocabulary and grammar especially;
- Read comprehensions already covered;
- Follow revision guide;
- Use hardbacks, copies and previous tests as revision resource;
- Organise handouts, especially those concerning written questions, letters, etc.;
- Listen to CDs with papers and textbooks;
- Practise speaking the language out loud – Senior Cycle: try to work with others – asking and answering questions.

#### **Humanities (History, Geography)**

- Junior Cert. students should read back over topics with key words in mind;
- Leaving Cert. students should learn notes / important facts / key dates by heart in order to be able to achieve high grades;
- Follow revision plan;
- Regularly check / test your knowledge;
- Identify gaps in notes / areas of weakness;
- Use an appropriate environment;
- Revise class notes regularly.