



Our Lady Immaculate School

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework has always been regarded as having an important function at Our Lady Immaculate School. As a whole school, we believe that, used properly, homework

- Can make an important contribution towards students' learning as if completed well it will serve as reinforcement to what has been carried out in class;
- Is a day-to-day connection between home and school;
- Provides the opportunity for more feedback on the students' attainment;
- Can provide a very good opportunity for interaction with parents.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY HOMEWORK

Homework refers to any activities which students are assigned to carry out outside lesson time.

These activities may take different forms, whether written, study, reading, practical or research / project work.

Such work is then followed up by the respective teacher/s and feedback is given in various forms namely comments, mark, or direct discussion with student.

Besides written tasks follow-up of work given can take various forms e.g. recall tests (written or oral), discussion, exhibition, presentations (even by using IT as a medium).

What is the Purpose of Homework

- Consolidating work done in class
- Strengthening the students' grasp of the subject
- Supplementing / Reinforcing what has been taught in school
- Improving skills and application of knowledge acquired during lessons
- Offering the chance of remote preparation for future lessons
- Opening up for the students areas of study and making possible the use of materials and information that are not accessible in the classroom
- Keeping parents / guardians in touch with what is happening in class
- Encouraging parents / guardians to be involved in students' work
- Educating students in time-management, responsibility and independence
- Developing perseverance and self-discipline in work
- Giving feedback to students



Our Lady Immaculate School

- Allowing the teacher to check that work has been understood.

TYPES OF HOMEWORK

Primary

Written homework is usually intended to consolidate and/or offer practice of skills taught in the classroom. Thus, language exercises, short questions on a unit covered in class, mathematical sums, creative writing or comprehension exercises may be given as homework. For public speaking, students will be asked to prepare a presentation. This will take place in both Maltese and English. All teachers are to ensure that the homework is age appropriate.

It is of utmost importance that all types of home-work is given its due importance and followed up with commitment. Homework is not always in a written form. Regular reading is of extreme importance for the education of every child. Reading and discussing the text with parents / guardians extends the child's understanding. Children who read regularly with an adult make more progress than those who do not.

Drawing and illustration as well as research work, suitable to the age and ability of the children, are also important forms of homework.

Regular revision work done at home with parents / guardians is a very good way of strengthening the children's grasp of the subject/s and enhances the involvement of parents / guardians in their children's life at school.

Secondary

Every subject teacher can give homework in one or more of the following forms, according to the subject being taught:

- creative writing
- grammar exercises
- comprehension work
- research / project work
- mathematical exercises
- essay work
- short answers to given questions
- scientific reports
- course work
- practical work



Our Lady Immaculate School

- theoretical and practical applications of topics covered in class
- preparation for class presentations even using IT

Regular revision work and reading are very important types of homework.

HOW LONG SHOULD HOME-WORK TAKE?

HOW OFTEN SHOULD HOME-WORK BE GIVEN?

DEADLINES REGARDING HOMEWORK

Primary

Pupils are assigned a moderate amount of homework but the amount varies according to the class and, sometimes, the topic being covered.

Moreover, different children work at different rates, so the time each child takes to complete her homework may vary.

Early Years (grades 1-3)

As a rule, however, pupils in Grade 1 should not take more than half an hour daily to complete their homework.

Pupils in Grade 2 should finish their homework in three quarters of an hour, while pupils in Grade 3 should do so in an hour. This time span also includes short intervals when children can stop for a short break if needed.

Homework may not be assigned daily.

Middle Years (grades4-6)

Pupils in the upper grades would have homework that takes slightly more than one hour, again, not necessarily on a daily basis.



Our Lady Immaculate School

Literacy and numeracy form the emphasis of homework in all the grades. In the case of Grades 3 and 4, there is occasional homework in other subjects, while in Grades 5 and 6 homework ranges over the whole curriculum.

Daily reading is part of homework, and this must not be overlooked. Developing reading skills is vital to success across the curriculum.

Secondary

Teachers are encouraged to assign moderate amounts of homework. No homework, except in rare cases, is assigned for the following day. A reasonable amount of time should be given by the teacher for the work to be completed. Deadlines are to be strictly adhered to by the students, but in verifiable genuine cases, there is a certain flexibility regarding deadlines.

Although a real effort is made by teachers to give a moderate amount of homework, certain topics and / or syllabus demands may lead to more homework than usual being assigned at one particular period. A proper teacher / student dialogue may clarify the situation and lead to a compromise e.g. the extension of a deadline.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

School Administration

The school administration undertakes to ensure that homework is given regularly by teachers in order to fulfill the purposes listed above. The quality of homework assigned is to contribute to students' learning and adequate feedback is provided to students and parents regarding homework.

The homework assigned will, in no way, compromise the students' safety or health. Neither will it involve them in extraordinary expenses over and above what is considered normal.

The administration is ready to discuss any problems that may arise regarding homework. Parents may make an appointment to discuss the matter with a member of the School Management Team and the teacher concerned when this is deemed necessary.

Teachers



Our Lady Immaculate School

- Teachers will integrate homework into their planning and ensure that homework tasks are carefully structured to student progress and learning.
- They will assess homework in a way that gives clear feedback to the students. Class and peer correction will not be ruled out, as long as valid feedback is given to students. Both marks and remarks are given by teachers especially when the latter clarify where the students have made mistakes.
- Teachers will keep a record of the homework assigned, when it was assigned, who failed to give it in, and the grade / mark / remark (where relevant) each student obtained.
- Teachers will give clear instructions to their students regarding homework and allocate time in the lesson for recording the instructions.
- Teachers will follow up homework by discussing any point/s not understood by students, either on an individual or on a class basis.
- Teachers may need to set homework during school holidays.

Learning Support Assistants

In cases of students who have learning problems, homework should not be excluded, but adapted.

LSAs will ensure that their students know exactly what homework assignment/s they have to carry out. They will keep in constant touch with the parents through the homework diary and/or the communication book to ensure that the parents know what homework has been given.

Where necessary, and in conjunction with the teacher/s concerned, facilitators will help adapt homework activities to make them match the abilities and need of their students, thus ensuring their progress and learning. Adapted work assigned will need to be endorsed by the teacher.

Students

- Students are expected to complete homework and hand it in on time.
- Their homework must show effort, be neat and as correctly done as possible.
- It is the students' responsibility to find out what homework has been assigned if and when they are absent.
- Students should do "Correction" when necessary, i.e. they should redo incorrect parts of the homework / assignment.



Our Lady Immaculate School

- Students are to hand in homework that has been done by them, and not copied and / or plagiarized.

Parents / Guardians

We encourage all our parents / guardians of both Primary and Secondary level students to

- NEVER do their children's homework themselves
- give value to homework and encourage their children to do it diligently and hand it in on time;
- agree together on a regular time and place for homework;
- provide a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which their children can do homework e.g. turn off television when it is homework time;
- support the school by explaining to their children how homework can enhance their learning;
- check their children's homework diaries (in the Primary);
- sit with their children and talk about their homework activities (in the Primary) whilst monitoring that it is being done;
- praise their children when their homework is correct and encourage them when it is not (in the Primary);
- discuss homework assignments with their secondary level children and show interest in feedback given by teachers, encouraging and praising according to the circumstances;
- make suggestions in a positive way e.g. "The teacher will understand your ideas better if you write more neatly and clearly";
- read to children and listen to them reading regularly;
- help with homework by checking for completeness, neatness and accuracy;
- contact the teacher by note or in person (by appointment) when their child is having trouble with homework.

When pupils are absent in the Primary, the homework will be handed to the pupil on her return to school. This homework should be completed over a period of time as deemed necessary according to the time of absence from school.

Parents may be called to school to discuss the matter if their daughter habitually and repetitively does not do her homework or does it in an unacceptable manner.



Our Lady Immaculate School

CONSEQUENCES AND SANCTIONS (For the secondary these will now be in line with Behaviour management policy – action plan this scholastic year)

- Students who do not hand in homework on time for a very good reason which is verifiable (e.g. family funeral or illness) may be allotted a longer time span to do so. This is within the teacher's discretion.
- **In the Primary** pupils who fail to complete homework and hand it in on time are first reprimanded and asked to do it. Should the problem persist, parents / guardians are then alerted to the problem through a written comment by the teacher on the students' behaviour/communication sheet. Parents / guardians are asked to sign the comment stating that the homework has not been done. If the problem repeats itself, it may be thought necessary to give a consequence e.g. 15 minutes of extra work.
- **In the Secondary** students who do not complete homework satisfactorily or fail to hand it in on time for the first time and for no good reason will be reprimanded and a written warning should be given on the students' behaviour sheet which should be duly signed by the parent / guardian. These reports are filed and kept for future reference.
- Should parents not sign or students lack to bring the behaviour sheet duly signed, the teacher is to inform the Assistant Head and the matter will then be follow up as deemed necessary.

If the problem persists, the parents / guardians are called to school to discuss the matter.

To be reviewed Sept 2020