

CARRIGTWOHILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HOMEWORK & STUDY POLICY

RATIFIED 19TH MAY 2022

REVIEWED AND RATIFIED 12TH MAY 2026



Introduction

“Carrigtwohill Community College is a community of learning and teaching where all members have the opportunity, and are encouraged, to reach their potential, where talents are nurtured, and positive relationships fostered through mutual respect.” Our Homework and Study policy plays an integral part in the realisation of this Mission Statement.

It serves as a guide for students, teachers and parents on how to improve classroom learning and fulfil students’ true potential. We strive for quality in teaching and learning. The main objective of teaching in our school is to increase the knowledge, understanding and skills of all students. Learning, the process to acquire knowledge and these skills, is built upon and shaped in the classroom learning environment. Learning is a lifelong skill and many strategies can be employed to improve learning. It is essential that students engage and participate in the learning process. To assist learning, students need to develop good classroom skills, learn to plan, manage and organise their work and time at home, develop strategies to improve learning and memory and refine study. Adequate and proper sleep coupled with a proper, well balanced diet are essential for effective learning.

Homework is intended to foster self-discipline, independent learning and encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning. Homework reinforces and extends classroom learning. Assessment for learning helps students to manage their learning. Study and revision embed that learning. Homework should be meaningful for the teacher and the student. It should serve to reinforce work done in class and it should act as a bridge between the work of one day and the next. It should be organically and systematically linked with and integrated into a programme of teaching and learning thereby forming part of the process of assessment for learning. It should be designed in such a way as to offer the students opportunities for self-assessment. It offers an opportunity for a more meaningful dialogue between school and home.

This policy applies to all students of Carrigtwohill Community College and relates to all school homework and assessment. The school policy aims to create an effective use of the homework journal and communication of homework to parents/guardians while ensuring expectations of home study are understood and addressed.

Rationale/Purpose

Effective homework and assessment make for effective education through practice and feedback. Homework is defined as the time students spend outside the classroom in assigned learning activities. The objectives of assigning homework to students are the same as teaching in general, i.e. to increase knowledge, understanding and skills of the students. “The literature on homework suggests the key to academic success does not rely on the amount of homework but rather on how students engage with homework,” comment the authors of the Irish study, which was funded by the NCCA [National Council for Curriculum and Assessment]

Purpose/Objective of Homework:

- Homework practice is a crucial link between teaching and learning. It acts as a bridge from one day to the next
- Helps teachers and students assess learning and progress
- Reinforces work completed in class
- Completes unfinished class assignments
- Helps students prepare for the next day
- Classroom learning is consolidated by assigning relevant, challenging, and meaningful homework assignments, thus providing students with the opportunity to understand, practice, reinforce, apply, or improve acquired skills and knowledge
- Homework is crucial to improving student academic performance as it:
 - Encourages the development of regular study
 - Stresses the importance of and builds confidence in the area of learning
 - Encourages regular revision which is necessary for good exam performance
 - Provides students with opportunities to develop their powers of concentration and attention as well as organisational and management skills
- It allows students to develop the practice of working independently and to take responsibility for their own learning, thus fostering lifelong learning skills
- It provides parents/guardians with opportunities to monitor their son/daughters learning and progress
- It contributes toward building personal responsibility, accountability, and self-discipline to complete assignments independently with deadlines and consequences
- It offers an opportunity to develop links between parents, teachers, and students
- Homework helps students to:
 - Construct knowledge
 - Develop deeper understandings and connections amongst the concepts to which they have been introduced
 - Use opportunities to apply the skills they have acquired
- It fosters positive values such as self-discipline, responsibility and an interest in learning which will benefit them throughout their lives
- Homework is a mode of assessment as teachers seek to discover what progress has been made by students. It is impossible for students to achieve true mastery of each subject without spending time studying at home

Not all homework is alike in nature, purpose or timing. Homework can be to prepare for the next class lesson, to practice or reinforce skills, knowledge and information taught in class, or to extend and expand on what was taught in class. Homework may include:

- Written assignments
- Learning vocabulary/keywords, memorizing, making notes or mind maps
- Revision work – written or learning
- Collecting or researching information
- Solving problems
- Reading, listening or watching subject related material
- Practical work practice
- Preparation work, essays, presentations, debates, reports
- Doing exercises based on class work
- Designing experiments/projects/models
- TEAMS exercises
- Video worksheets
- Creating video reports

This list is by no means exhaustive.

Whole School Approach to Homework and Study Skills

Carrigtwohill Community College expects that all homework is completed on time and to the best of a student's ability. The school supports students in their endeavors in the following ways:

- School Journal
 - Each student has a homework journal. Students are expected to record **all** aspects of homework for every subject daily. Journals are not private to students and act as a link between parents/guardians and teachers
 - Homework is corrected regularly and in a timely fashion
 - Students are encouraged to track their progress in subjects in their journal
- Revision focus:
 - Topics for revision are given to students prior to their assessments
- SEN:
 - The SEN department assists students via coteaching or withdrawal
 - The SEN department also assist with guidance on differentiation
- Club Obair Bhaile [Homework Club]
 - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 3.35– 5.05p.m. (1st, 2nd year students) and 3:35- 5:35p.m. (3rd, 5th, 6th year students)
 - 1.10–2.40p.m. (1st, 2nd year students) and 1:10-3:10p.m. (3rd, 5th, 6th year students)
- Class Tutor
 - Every student is assigned a class tutor who is there to support and guide students through their Post-Primary journey. They also carry out a weekly check to ensure homework is being written in for each subject in students homework journal
 - Checks students' behaviour on VSware to identify homework related issues/concerns & discusses with student
 - Devise a plan to support homework, e.g. target sheets/interventions for homework
 - Refer student to *Student Support Services* team where an issue/concern regarding homework prevails
- Study Skills Workshop
 - Students attend a study skills workshop while their parents/guardians are also invited to an evening information session.
- Students have the opportunity to participate in a mindfulness session

Expectations & Responsibilities:

Set out below are the expectations and responsibilities of students, parents/guardians and teachers in relation to homework and study procedures. Students differ in terms of their ability and speed of completion of work therefore it is impossible to be specific as to the amount of time to be spent on a daily basis on homework and revision by each individual student.

Students will:

- Record **all** homework in their journal for each subject daily
- Ask for clarity if they do not understand the homework assigned
- Post a query on TEAMS if they have a question relating to homework/assignment before emailing their teacher. TEAMS provide an opportunity for students to help each other with queries & fosters a spirit of peer support
- Understand that homework will vary in nature, i.e. there are many types of homework as outlined above
- Complete their **own** homework, i.e. not copied from another student
- Not present their homework to others to copy
- Get their journal signed by their parent/guardian weekly
- Make their best effort at homework
- Check success criteria for homework prior to submission to ensure the work is completed correctly.
- Catch up on any homework missed due to school activities, e.g. trips, events, matches
- Present written homework in a neat and legible manner
- Get a written explanation from parent/guardian where homework is not completed on time
- Have the necessary books and equipment on hand to complete their homework
- Attend the parent/student/teacher meeting
- Get subject assessments signed by their parent/guardian
- If acting as the designated person, post homework in a timely manner on the class TEAM
- Where signed up, attend club obair bhaile and work to the best of their ability while there
- Communicate with their teachers if/when difficulties arise

Students should:

- Take notes when it is important to remember what the teacher is saying or seek clarification if they do not understand
- Learn from corrected homework and feedback received from teachers
- Read over notes before class
- Start your study of a chapter by reading the headings/subheadings
- Generate questions about its content after reading a section of a chapter
- Write definitions of key terms
- Control test anxiety by exercise, controlled breathing, positive thinking, meditation and preparation
- In assessments answer the questions you feel most confident about first to build momentum

Parents/Guardians will:

- Provide a suitable environment for their son/daughter in which homework and study can be completed to the best possible standard
- Encourage their son/daughter to spend sufficient time on homework and revision each night
- Monitor homework of their son/daughter & its completion
- Monitor assessment results
- Check VSware weekly for communications regarding your son/daughters' progress
- Check and sign their sons/daughters journal weekly
- Help their son/daughter to manage their time efficiently
- Attend parent/student/teacher meeting
- Support the school with any sanctions employed to deal with incomplete/no homework
- Provide a note of explanation for incomplete or failure to complete homework
- Assist in the implementation of a plan to support homework, e.g. target sheets for homework/behaviour, if deemed necessary. A student may be referred to *Student Support Services* team where an issue/concern regarding homework prevails
- Communicate with their son/daughters' Class Tutor / Year Head where difficulties persist regarding completion of homework
- Discuss attendance/possible attendance at club obair bhaile [homework club] with their son/daughter. This is where students have the opportunity to complete their homework & study in a quiet supervised

environment

- Discuss assessment results and assessment work with their son/daughter and sign their completed assessment
- For those students who attend club obair bhaile, discuss the impact of this for your son/daughter. Every once in a while ask them to bring home their journal and evidence of their homework and cross check against their journal record and their TEAMS for that class

Teachers/Staff will:

- Set homework regularly
- Ensure students are given time to write homework into their school Journal
- Assign the responsibility to a selected student to post homework to the class TEAMS
- Record incomplete or no homework on the students VSware behaviour profile and allocate points as appropriate
- Ensure homework is checked and corrected via teacher assessment, peer assessment or self-assessment
- Keep a record of homework assigned
- Differentiate homework as required
- Discuss the success criteria for homework
- Implement school policy where homework is persistently incomplete
- Award positive VSWare points where homework is considered to be of a consistently high standard
- Inform parents/guardians of any tracking sheets assigned for homework/behaviour
- Encourage students to attend club obair bhaile [homework club]

Appendices

Appendix 1: Best Practice Homework Guidelines for Teachers

Appendix 2: Homework/Study Guidelines for Parents/Guardians

Appendix 3: Homework Guidelines for Junior Cycle Students

Appendix 4: Homework and Study Guidelines for Senior Cycle Students

Appendix 5: Information Sheet for Parents of Leaving Certificate Students

Appendix 1: Best Practice Homework Guidelines for Teachers

1. Ensure homework [type and quantity] is considered in the development of units of work during subject planning
2. Ensure, in so far as possible, that relevant homework is assigned for each class period
3. Ensure students have recorded their homework in their journal before departure from the classroom
4. Ensure homework has relevance to the topic being covered/topic about to be covered
5. Ensure the amount of homework assigned is realistic in terms of the time required to complete it
6. Ensure students are aware of what is expected of them regarding their homework
7. Ensure homework is checked and corrected and any areas identified as weak are revisited before proceeding with the topic
8. Ensure variety when assigning homework to cater for the different learning styles of your students
9. Ensure a record is kept of all homework assigned
10. Ensure, where possible, that an *expected completion time* is provided for students
11. Ensure that students know when the completed homework is due for
12. Support/advise students regarding managing their time effectively:
 - a. complete homework on the day it has been assigned
 - b. if unsure/stuck when completing homework, use notes, examples and previous classwork to help move homework forward and note where the difficulty arose so that clarity can be sought in the following class
 - c. Limit time on homework for each subject to ensure all subjects are being considered. In the event of incomplete homework ensure evidence of effort and record exact point of difficulty and time spent trying to complete it
13. Seek evidence of effort made
14. When creating online folders for students ensure data protection is in place
15. Seek evidence of attempts by students to self-assess, make key notes, revise
 - a. Provide guidance for students on *how* to go about learning/revising a topic, e.g. POKER technique
 - i. **Pre-test**
 - ii. **Overview of key headings**

- iii. **Keywords**
 - iv. **Etch & Sketch** – create mind-maps, diagrams, flow charts
 - v. **Retest**
- 16. Ensure variety in terms of assessment, e.g. written, presentation, creation of a model/poster, individual/team, verbal report
 - 17. Ensure variety in terms of assessing student work, i.e. self-assessment, peer-assessment and teacher-assessed
 - a. For self-assessment and peer-assessment ensure success criteria or a fully worked solution with marking scheme are provided to assist student's accuracy in correcting work
 - 18. Encourage and assist students in tracking their progress
 - 19. Facilitate and guide students in setting realistic targets for your subject
 - 20. Ensure students understand the importance of receiving and completing homework

Appendix 2: Homework/Study Guidelines for Parents/Guardians

1. Check homework journal, daily, if possible, to ensure homework is being written in
 - a. The subjects for each day should be written in
2. Check son's/daughter's subject TEAMS for homework details, which should be in line with that entered in the journal
3. Look for evidence of completed homework
4. Help your son/daughter understand the purpose and importance of receiving and completing homework
5. Encourage and assist in creating a daily routine for homework at home, e.g. on return home from school/before other activities, have a break with small snack and then start homework straight away if possible
6. Ensure the home environment is conducive to the efficient completion of homework, i.e. a realistic noise level, necessary resources are in place, e.g. desk, supportive chair, shelving/storage, stationary, a good lighting level and room temperature between 16^o - 20^o
7. Encourage and assist in the development of organisation and time management skills
8. Where homework seems to be taking an excessive amount of time consider the following:
 - a. Where is homework being done, i.e. in bedroom, in kitchen
 - b. What possible distractions are present, e.g. iPad, phone, other technological device, sports equipment, music, make-up

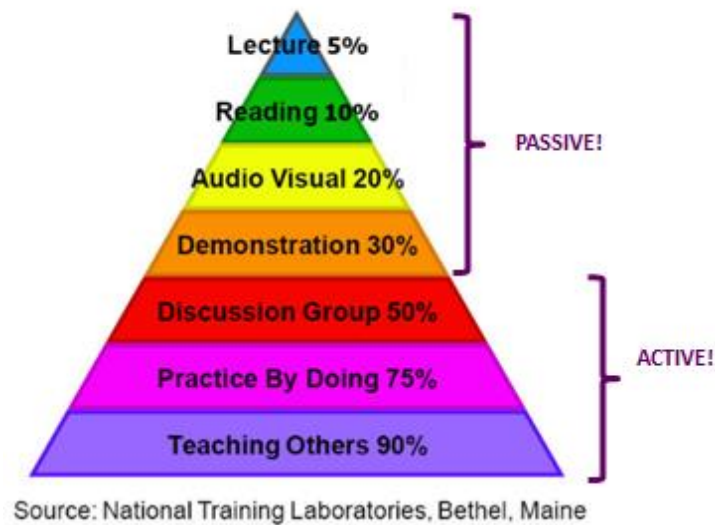
Possible checks/changes:

1. Have son/daughter complete their homework within your visibility
2. Set a time limit for homework and divide this between the subjects listed for that day. Allow extra time for particular subjects if required.
3. Note time allocation on subjects
4. Communicate with subject teacher to ascertain how long homework should be taking / seek advice
5. Check-in regularly to ensure progress is being made
6. Homework is not advisable after 9pm or in the morning before school
7. Ensure breakfast has been eaten before school and that a nourishing lunch/snack before club or air

bhaile is provided daily

8. Limit the consumption of junk food
9. Encourage completing homework on Friday after school or Saturday morning
10. Offer advice/help if your son/daughter finds a particular piece of homework difficult
11. Encourage them to do their best
12. Encourage active learning methods to maximise retention as depicted below:

Average Retention Rates



13. Help your son/daughter to learn to cope with anxiety – ensuring a routine to ensure they are well prepared in advance will help in building confidence in their ability to successfully complete an assessment
14. Ensure realistic expectations are set for your son/daughter and discuss these with them
15. Discuss assessments and mistakes made – determine if mistakes made were due to lack of procedural discipline or lack of understanding/learning
16. Ensure school bag is packed with correct resources each evening, consulting the students timetable and homework assigned.
17. Encourage son/daughter to ask questions in class
18. Check presentation of written homework & insist on it being completed to expected standards, i.e. work should be dated, a section title should be present, question parts should be correctly labelled, and writing should be neat and eligible

19. Encourage the gradual moving towards independent responsibility & own homework space. This is done by initially having a routine of constantly checking in and insisting on procedures/practice. Then slowly reducing the frequency of checks provided homework is being done efficiently/standards are being met
20. iPads and phones should be charged at night and should not be in the bedroom
21. Encourage regular exercise and relaxation including participation in extra-curricular activities in school
22. Transition year provides an invaluable opportunity to strengthen basic concepts and to explore connections within and between subjects while also looking at real-life links
23. Homework and assessments in transition year are an excellent way to slowly transition from junior cycle to senior cycle and should be viewed as valuable opportunities to establish strong foundations in senior cycle curriculum
24. Guide for time to be spent on homework/study **per day** is as follows:
 - i. 1st Year: 1 1/2 hours
 - ii. 2nd Year: 2 – 2 1/2 hours
 - iii. 3rd Year: 2 1/2 - 3 hours
 - iv. 5th Year: 2 1/2 - 3 hours
 - v. 6th Year: 3 – 4 hours

Appendix 3: Homework Guidelines for Junior Cycle Students

1. Concentrate fully and sit away from distractions
2. Ask appropriate questions, before leaving class if you are unsure. Contact a classmate and/or post on TEAMS before emailing teacher
3. Ensure homework is recorded in journal before leaving the class
4. Fill in homework assigned for every subject in student journal
5. Reading over/looking at material will not work for effective retention of content.
6. In the event of no specific homework being assigned this implies that revision of notes on the topic is expected
7. Complete homework on the night it has being assigned
8. Complete homework as early in the evening as possible
9. Complete homework in an environment/space with minimal noise and disturbance
10. Have all the necessary resources with you for the completion of your homework, i.e. before you leave school ensure you have what you need from your school locker
11. Distribute your time proportionally between your subjects, i.e. in line with the amount of homework you have received in each
12. Ensure you are eating properly and as nutritionally as possible, breakfast is essential daily to ensure you have the best opportunity regarding focus and concentration
13. Ensure you get time to relax before bedtime
14. If in difficulty while completing your homework, revisit notes/examples/classwork, success criteria. If difficulty persists then record exactly what the difficulty is and the time you have taken in trying to complete the homework. Attempt every question, make your best effort.
15. On the weekend, complete homework Friday evening or Saturday morning. Do not leave homework for Sunday evening
16. Pack your school bag with necessary resources the evening before school
17. Homework and assessments in transition year are an excellent way to slowly transition from junior cycle to senior cycle and should be viewed as valuable opportunities to establish strong foundations in senior cycle curriculum

18. Guide for reasonable time to be spent on homework/study **per day** is:

- i. 1st Year: $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours
- ii. 2nd Year: $2 - 2\frac{1}{2}$ hours
- iii. 3rd Year: $2\frac{1}{2} - 3$ hours

Appendix 4: Homework and Study Guidelines for Senior Cycle Students

1. Work on establishing a balance between schoolwork and time-out/exercise.
2. A nourishing balanced diet and adequate sleep are essential
3. Your study environment should not contain any distractions, e.g. phone, iPad, game consoles, TV
4. It should have adequate supports, i.e. desk, supportive chair, shelving, stationary and a good level of lighting and room temperature between 16^o and 20^o
5. Where homework is finished 'early' spend some time on revision
6. Set time aside at weekends for revision
7. Begin with the more difficult/challenging subjects and finish with your 'easier' subjects
8. Pay attention to the time you give each subject when completing homework. If stuck, move on to the next subject and go back to it at the end
9. Take breaks between subjects (3-5 mins)
10. Work toward active retention, i.e. discussion, practice and teaching others to maximise learning and minimise time
11. Set a realistic target in each subject (no more than 2 grades above your current grade)
12. Record your progress in each subject and identify areas of weakness. This will inform your revision
13. Get organized – have a folder for each subject divided into sections in line with the syllabus for that subject. This will help to organize information in your mind
14. Make out a revision topic for each subject in order of priority in terms of relevance / your own level of understanding. Begin with the most important / most challenging aspect first
15. Seek advice/clarity from your subject teacher. Ask for direction in terms of revision material and areas of priority. Take the lead
16. Break an assignment/task into small manageable tasks
17. 2 1/2 – 3 1/2 hours on homework each evening in senior cycle is seen as reasonable

Appendix 5: Information Sheet for Parents/Guardians of Leaving Certificate Students

1. “Plan your Success now!” Senior Cycle is a new road on your Post-Primary journey
2. 6th year is a time of hope and often some anxiety for both students and parents/guardians. It is vital that students plan their time to make the most of the year
3. As parents you will play an important role in supporting your son/daughter. We ask you to be actively involved in assisting them to set goals and to manage and organise their time
4. Throughout the year it is essential that you stay involved and ‘check in’ regularly with them
5. Daily school attendance is essential. Students should not take unnecessary days or half days off school as course work covered by teachers each day is very difficult to catch up on when missed
6. We strongly discourage part-time work on school nights during term time. It is difficult to be successful in 6th year if doing homework late into the night after work or working long hours over the weekend
7. We advise that personal study [revision] is started from the beginning of 6th year, i.e. in September to avoid cramming later and reducing anxiety and stress
8. Students need to include regular revision as well as homework each night
9. Students need to ‘pace’ study throughout the year, i.e. work in line with the assessment plan. The intensity of study should vary at times to avoid burnout
10. A certain amount of stress is normal and can help to bring out their best performance in 6th year, but excessive or unreasonable stress can be damaging. Working outside of school, having too many extra-curricular activities, having unrealistic expectations or not managing study can lead to overload
 - a. Symptoms include: tension & irritability, disturbed sleep patterns, withdrawal, absenteeism, poor timekeeping, low morale and physical disorders such as ulcers, skin & dietary problems
11. Proper diet, regular exercise, adequate sleep, other activities and time to relax should be encouraged and are vital as they provide a balance to the hours of study in this stressful year
12. We would encourage students to:
 - a. Make school a priority for the 9 months of 6th year
 - b. Organise a plan for study from the beginning of the year

- c. Maintain a balanced lifestyle – relax, eat and sleep well and exercise
- d. Plan some time out for yourself
- e. Practice relaxation techniques like breathing exercises, meditation
- f. Recognise stress signals and get help early to manage and build resilience.
- g. Talk to someone at home or at school

13. 3-4 hours on homework each evening in 6th year is seen as reasonable.

14. It is recommended that 6th year students attend and engage with club obair bhaile.