St. Attracta’s Community School,
Tubbercurry,
Co. Sligo.

HOMEWORK POLICY
SCOPE
This policy is whole-school.

RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOL’S MISSION/VISION STATEMENTS
The motto of the school *In Unum pro Veritate* encapsulates the ethos of the school. This policy promotes a whole school approach to homework, inclusive of teachers, parents/guardians and student.

HOMEWORK DEFINITION
Homework is schoolwork which a student is expected to do at home.

RATIONAL
1. Good homework practice is a foundation for effective teaching and learning.
2. This homework policy will help students to consolidate and to gain a better understanding of skills and information they learn in the classroom.
3. Homework enables the student to take responsibility for his/her own learning in an experiential way and it promotes student independence and initiative.
4. Homework facilitates evaluation of both teaching and learning for the teacher as well as the student.
5. This policy is a means of students and teachers gaining more satisfaction from school/homework. This will lead to the highest standard of learning with students achieving their full potential.

GOALS/OBJECTIVES
1. To enable both students and teachers to gain more satisfaction from work done in an organised and orderly fashion.
2. To foster a consistent approach to the completion of homework and encourage students to take responsibility for homework, thereby reinforcing the learning that has taken place in the classroom.
3. To encourage parents/guardians to play an active role in monitoring homework.

POLICY CONTENT
1. The suggested student homework/study minimum duration time is as follows:
   - First years: 1½ - 2 hours per evening.
   - Second years: 2 - 2½ hours per evening.
   - Third years: 2½ - 3 hours per evening.
   - Transition years: Project work/research as required.
   - Fifth years: 3 - 3½ hours per evening.
   - Sixth years: 3½ - 4 hours per evening.
2. Each subject department will make decisions and recommendations regarding the implementation of the homework policy in their subject area.
3. Teachers and students will implement the 7 Step Homework Plan (Appendix 2) available in the Student Journal, at the outset of first year.
4. The following stages are recommended in the giving and monitoring of homework in first year:

   Teachers will:
   - endeavour to allow adequate time during class for giving homework;
   - ensure homework is relevant to the learning objectives of the subject;
   - encourage students to record homework in their journals;
   - make an attempt to assign a variety of homework types e.g. research, written, oral, practical etc.;
   - note that it is advisable to set common achievable homework with varying expectations and for the teacher to apply their knowledge of student ability and reading/writing levels when setting homework;
• ensure that homework is monitored regularly and that constructive, formative feedback is given;
• present homework as something positive that contributes to learning;
• use of I.T. is encouraged as a research tool/ for presentations where appropriate.

Students will:
• record and complete homework and will ask for assistance if they experience difficulties;
• engage in training/support in study skills;
• have the necessary equipment in class;
• record work done in class for revision purposes if homework is not given;
• find out work missed when absent (i.e. school trips, sport, illness etc.) and arrange to catch up.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to:
• attend the September meeting for First Years which will include input on the homework policy and on the role of the parent/guardian in relation to the policy;
• look at and sign the journal weekly and take an interest in the quality of the homework their child is submitting;
• sign the journal each week and check that the homework is being completed;
• take appropriate action if informed that a student is regularly not carrying out homework;
• inform the year head if their child is experiencing ongoing difficulties with homework completion.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Management
1. Approve and support the policy.

Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads
1. Ensure that policy is reviewed periodically.
2. Make the 7 Step Homework Plan available in the Student Journal.
3. Year-head to meet with parents/guardians regarding homework issues when appropriate.

Subject Teacher
1. Set relevant homework when appropriate.
2. Leave sufficient time in class for students to take down homework especially in the initial phase.
3. Give advance notice to students, particularly exam students, of homework.
4. Encourage students to record homework in journals.
5. Ensure students are clear as to what they are expected to do.
6. Encourage good homework practice and effective study skills (The 7 Step Homework Plan and Study Skills Seminars).
7. Monitor homework and provide feedback.
8. Reinforce skills learned by students.
9. Reinforce the homework policy and positive aspects in relation to homework.
10. Foster good practice in terms of time management.
11. Record non-completion of homework when appropriate.

Guidance Department and Learning Support Team
1. Provide support and guidance to students/teachers/parents/guardians, in particular concerning students with special needs.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to:
1. Actively support the policy;
2. Provide suitable conditions in the home for completion of homework and limit distractions particularly I.T. devices that are not relevant to homework;
3. Monitor their child’s homework and encourage good practice regarding time spent, quality of presentation and quality of work;
4. Sign the journal daily for two weeks (First Year) and weekly for the academic year.
5. Prioritise homework over other activities.

**Student**
1. Record homework in journal.
2. Present homework properly.
3. Complete homework to the best of his/her ability.
4. Use homework as an opportunity to improve his/her learning.
5. Communicate difficulties with homework to subject teacher.
6. Show his/her journal and homework as requested to a parent/guardian daily/weekly for signing.
7. Find out work missed when absent and arrange to catch up.

**IMPLEMENTATION**
1. Subject Department
   (a) Discuss different kinds of homework appropriate to subject.
   (b) Discuss appropriate time period for homework.
   (c) Discuss various ways to monitor and correct homework.
   (d) Refer to Homework Policy incorporated into Department Plan.

2. Year Head
   (a) Attend information evening of all parents/guardians of first year at start of school year with an input on promoting/explaining policy.
   (b) Liaise with junior tutors throughout the year to support implementation of policy.
   (c) Follow up on students who have several non-completion of homework incidents.
   (d) Praise students who regularly complete homework.
   (e) Discuss effectiveness of homework policy regularly at meetings.

   (a) Follow-up on students experiencing difficulties with homework.
   (b) Offer advice to teachers/students/parents/guardians re homework.

4. Principal/Deputy Principal
   (a) Ensure that policy document is circulated to all staff.
   (b) Ensure that new members of staff are aware of and understand policy.
   (c) Promote and encourage implementation of policy among students, parents/guardians, teachers at information evenings, assemblies, meetings etc.

**SUCCESS CRITERIA**
1. Students express satisfaction with level and amount of homework within the guidelines.
2. Quality of homework is high.
3. The academic performance of students is enhanced.
4. Students are more organised and journals are neater.
5. Teachers express satisfaction with the completion and standard of homework.
6. Teachers experience increased levels of understanding from students in terms of learning.

**MONITORING PROCEDURES**
1. See Appendix 1 for suggestions to monitoring of homework.

**REVIEW PROCEDURES**
This policy will be reviewed periodically.
Appendix 1

This appendix outlines a variety of approaches to monitoring, correcting and recording homework. Different strategies are appropriate for different situations and the teacher will choose methods that best suit their subject and their learning outcomes for the lesson. This list is not conclusive and offers merely a sample of possible approaches that can be used in accordance with the professional judgement of each teacher.

Suggestions for Monitoring of Homework

- Spot check on a sample of the students in the class by subject teacher to check work is done
- Students self correct their work from a master sheet or from the board
- Students swap copies and correct each other’s work while teacher circulates
- Use of homework stamp in student’s copies
- Oral correction – teacher and/or student calls out homework solutions and other students correct their work
- Collection of copies – for whole class or for a different sample of students from week to week
- Quick test on homework that involved learning to check if students learned their work effectively
- Student asked to state what they learned from doing their homework at the start of class
- Subject teacher to note in the journal if a student is regularly not complying with the homework policy
- Photocopy and display a sample of well-presented or well done homework as an example to others in class (ensuring a wide range of students’ work is displayed)
- Highlight common errors by asking where students went wrong and what have they learned from their mistakes

Suggestions for Recording of Homework

- Teacher records standard of homework for a sample of students in their teacher journal regularly – mixture of good and unsatisfactory notes
- Teacher records standard of homework in a number of student journals
- Notes:
  - Suggested code for recording standard of homework in journals instead of longer written notes. Teachers could then just use the code and teacher’s initials.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>Excellent standard of homework</td>
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<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>Homework well presented</td>
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<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory attempt at homework</td>
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<tr>
<td>H4</td>
<td>Homework incomplete</td>
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<tr>
<td>H5</td>
<td>Homework not attempted or not brought to class</td>
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An alternative to codes could be a set of school homework stamps provided to all teachers.
## Appendix 2

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Step 1: Record homework</th>
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<tr>
<td>Write your homework into your journal after every subject. Note the correct day, subject and estimated time.</td>
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<th>Step 2: What you need</th>
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<td>Ensure you have all your required equipment such as books, pens, calculator, ruler etc.</td>
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<th>Step 3: Make it neat</th>
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<td>Make it neat and organised. Ensure your handwriting is clear and that you use margins, dates, headings and question numbers.</td>
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<th>Step 4: Difficulties</th>
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<td>If you have difficulties try and find the section in the book to help, or an example from class. Always tell your teacher if you have problems with your homework.</td>
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<th>Step 5: Challenge yourself</th>
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<td>If you find homework too easy, try reading ahead in the book and asking your teacher for extra work.</td>
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<th>Step 6: What you learn</th>
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<tr>
<td>Your teacher will correct your homework and tell you what you did well and what you need to improve. Mistakes are O.K as long as we learn from them.</td>
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<th>Step 7: Review</th>
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<tr>
<td>Well done! Try and do your best. Review homework and ensure you as your teacher if you have any questions or difficulties.</td>
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