



Maryfield College

STUDY SKILLS POLICY DOCUMENT

Guidance and Counselling School Plan

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INTRODUCTION

Maryfield College is committed to a whole school approach to study skills. The following is an outline of the school's study skills policy:

The SPHE programme:

This programme is currently running on the basis of one period per week. It offers a module in 'self management' that includes exercises in:

- How to do homework
- Reading for information
- Listening skills
- Note taking and note making
- Goal setting

This module is presented at the beginning of each year for 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students.

Class Tutors:

Each class tutor checks at the beginning of each term that students have homework journals and talks to them about the importance of organising their journals and keeping accurate and detailed instructions regarding homework given. This work is emphasised in particular at the beginning of 1st year. Teachers, tutors and year head carry out spot checks in the first term to establish the habit of journal keeping.

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Subject Teachers:

Where students do not have homework done, the subject teacher uses the facility of the homework journal to inform the student's parents and to request that this note be countersigned by the student's parents for the subsequent class.

Individual subject teachers instruct students in the specific approach recommended for students following courses in their particular subject.

Class teachers also break down study into manageable pieces by presenting class room tests on a regular basis in the course of each term. A body of work is built up leading to revision for in-house school examinations. These are held in November for the Christmas tests, in February: "mock" Junior.& Leaving for 3rd and 6th years and Summer tests at the end of the school year.

Many teachers (subject policy differs) offer a marking scheme that is designed to encourage incremental study by including a continual assessment element into the end of term/year grade.

Transition Year:

At the beginning of Transition Year emphasis is placed on the importance of keeping an appointments/ homework journal to organise student participation in events, as well as appointments and deadlines for work to be handed up.

Evaluation of student participation in events and different learning experiences during 4th year is encouraged so that students can reflect on different learning strengths. This reflection is given particular time and scope during the tutor class which takes place once a week. Students keep a record of this progress in a report book/ journal.

Student reflection on the process of "self monitoring of progress" is also encouraged by asking students to evaluate their own participation and progress at two interviews with year head, co-ordinator and class tutor. This enables the students to evaluate their experiences and work throughout Transition Year.

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The Guidance Counsellor:

The Guidance Counsellor (where time and resources allow) sees students, from first to sixth year, on an individual basis in relation to study skills. This may form part of an overall guidance and counselling session with a student or may be specifically in relation to study/ homework (c. f. Homework policy) Topics covered include: goal setting, study environment, time-management, time-table planning, memory aids/ techniques, concentration, learning in class, learning /revision at home.

This support is offered to individual junior students on a needs/ request basis. Referral may be from staff, parents or self-referral. Senior students have careers classes with the guidance counsellor and these topics will be covered from time to time. Sixth years will have on going careers appointments, which sometimes afford opportunities to deal with study skills.

Study Skills Seminars:

A one-day seminar for 5th year students and a half-day seminar for 2nd year students takes place each year in January and April respectively. This gives students an opportunity to review and develop useful study techniques prior to embarking on their state examination preparation. These seminars include topics such as goal setting, time management, note taking, exam techniques, essay writing and study methods.

Year Heads:

Year Heads monitor students' reports and progress throughout the year, particularly following Christmas reports. They see students who have experienced difficulty focusing on study and homework routine and encourage them to set realistic targets to improve journal keeping and study skills.

The Deputy Principal and Year Head interview 6th year students who are not performing and review and evaluate each student's study plan.

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The Learning Support Teacher (where time and resources allow) helps students, 1st year in particular, who are identified as experiencing difficulty following the Christmas exams.

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