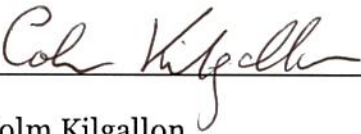


School Improvement Plan 2024-2025

Ardgillan College



Colm Kilgallon

Chairperson

Board of Management



Date ratified by the Board of Management

Our Focus

Students reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership of and responsibility for their learning.

The Target for 2024/25

To improve the quality of homework submitted by students.

Gather Evidence

This section of the document outlines all of the data gathered which informed our School Improvement Plan for the 2024/25 academic year.



The following data gives us a picture of the current situation in our school on the quality of homework being submitted by students. The data below is made up of results from a student focus group (split into junior and senior students), results from a student survey and results from a teacher survey.

1) Student Focus Group:

Junior students focus group feedback:

How can we encourage students to give quality homework?

- Sometimes students get so much homework that the quality is not good as they are rushing
- Some students don't feel motivated to put the effort into homework
- Too tired to do homework well – not getting enough sleep
- Some students report that they get less homework with 1 hour classes
- Rewards/gold stars would be nice for good quality homework
- The students would prefer a merit to a physical reward - maybe a merit specifically for homework?
- Students with extra-curricular activities find it difficult to get homework done
- Students appreciate homework in some subjects e.g. maths
- Students would like help with organising time for homework in the evening
- It can be difficult to make time for study
- If test is coming up-learning homework would be more beneficial
- **NB 1st year induction-need to register them for online books.**
(Students report having to bring home multiple books for one item of homework)

What type of homework do you find most difficult and why? E.g. learning homework, written homework etc.

- Written homework takes more time
- Learning homework is quicker
- Note-taking homework can be tedious
- Typing essays for some subjects can be difficult
- Help with spreading out homework
- Online books NOT working.

Senior students focus group feedback:

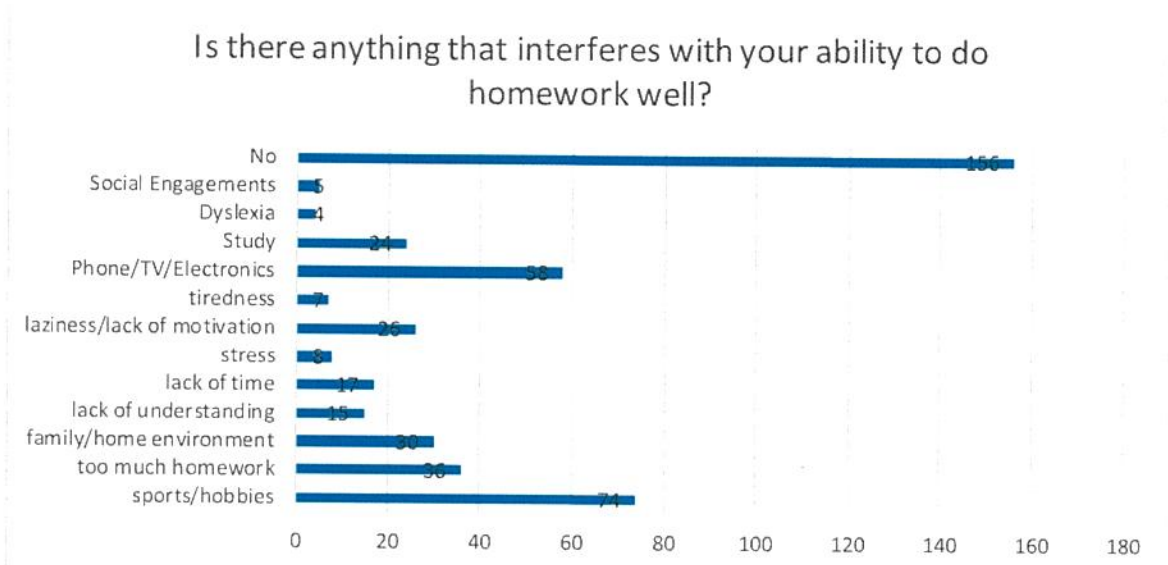
How can we encourage students to give quality homework?

- Increased deadlines-longer time for homework to be done. If there's a short deadline, there is need to rush it. But there is a tendency to leave it to the last minute even when the deadline is long.
- If there is a long deadline, it would motivate the students to start earlier if the teacher checked their progress periodically.
- Too many long written assignments.
- Small pieces of homework per class is okay or 1 week to do essay (happy medium)
- Students tend to try harder on the subjects they prefer.
- Motivation to put effort into homework comes down to the individual.
- Sometimes teachers don't check homework at all – this is very demotivating if the student has worked hard on the homework. Eventually the students don't bother doing the homework for the teachers who don't check it.
- Considerations for other subjects with homework (teachers).
- More homework is being given since 1 hour classes started.
- Students would like the reasoning for homework to be explained to motivate them to do it.
- Teachers not checking homework leads to students becoming de motivated.
- Some students find time to balance homework and study difficult.

What type of homework do you find most difficult and why? E.g. learning homework, written homework etc.

- Depends on individual student.
- Exam questions are the most difficult but the students prefer this type of work because it will help them in their exams.
- Written homework and essay based questions are difficult for some students.

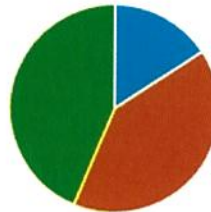
2) Student Survey results: The following data was gathered from students in all year groups in Ardgillan College.



4. Do you find homework useful for your learning?

[More Details](#)

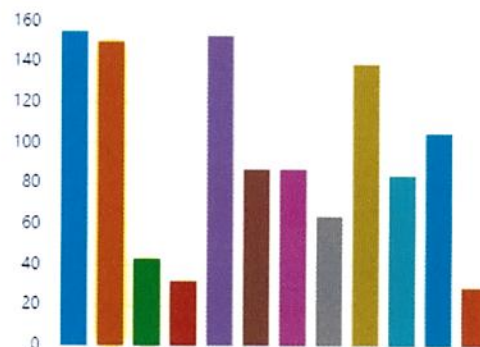
Yes	72
No	187
Somewhat	201



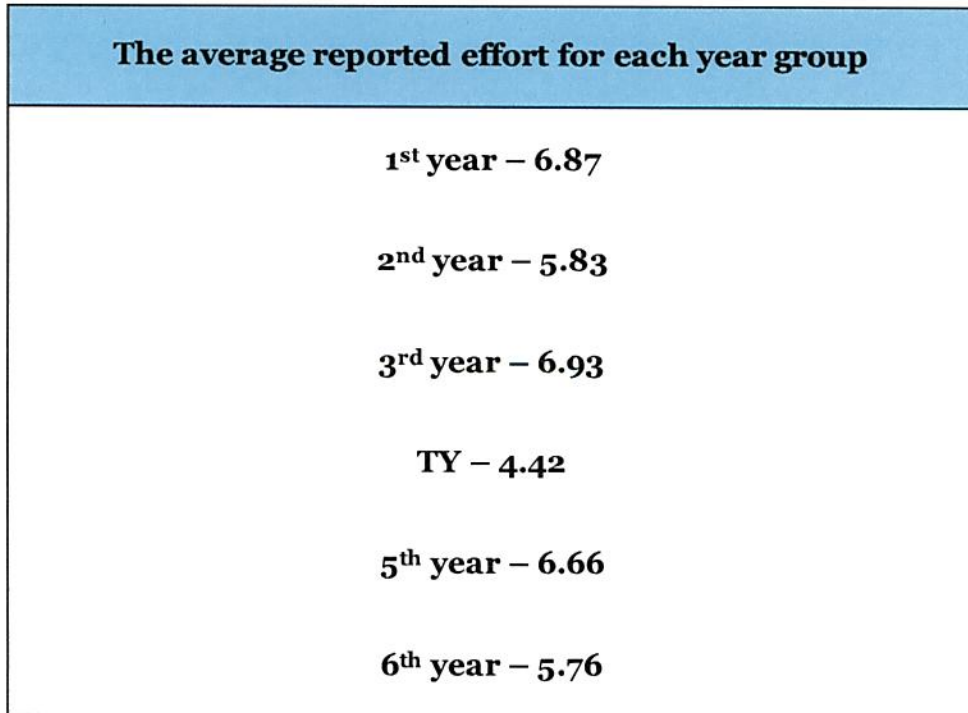
5. What type of homework do you find helpful to your learning? (Tick as many as apply)

[More Details](#)

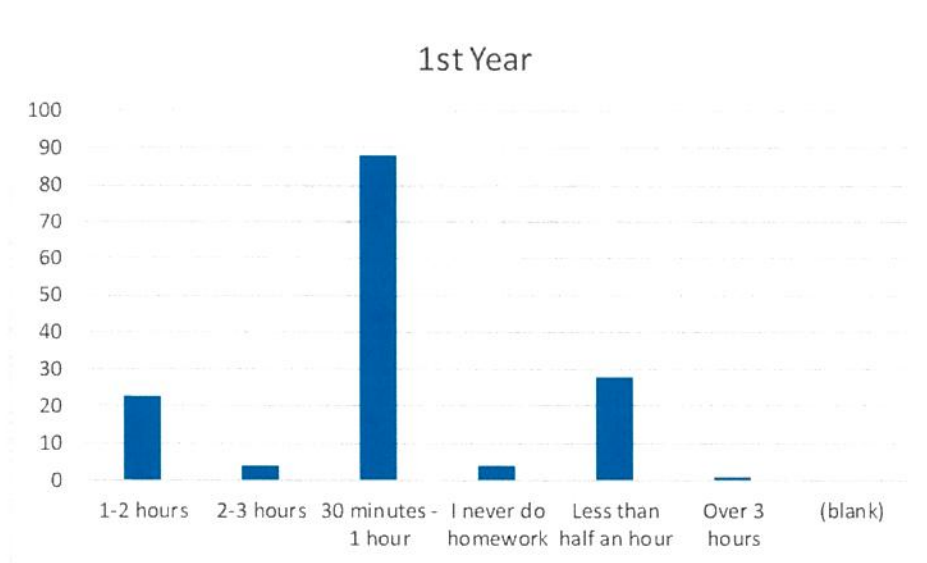
Answering questions from the t...	155
Worksheet	150
Essay writing	43
Listening homework	32
Exam paper questions	153
Learning off by heart	87
Reading	87
Poster making	64
Note taking	139
Project work	84
Watching a documentary or video	105
Other	29

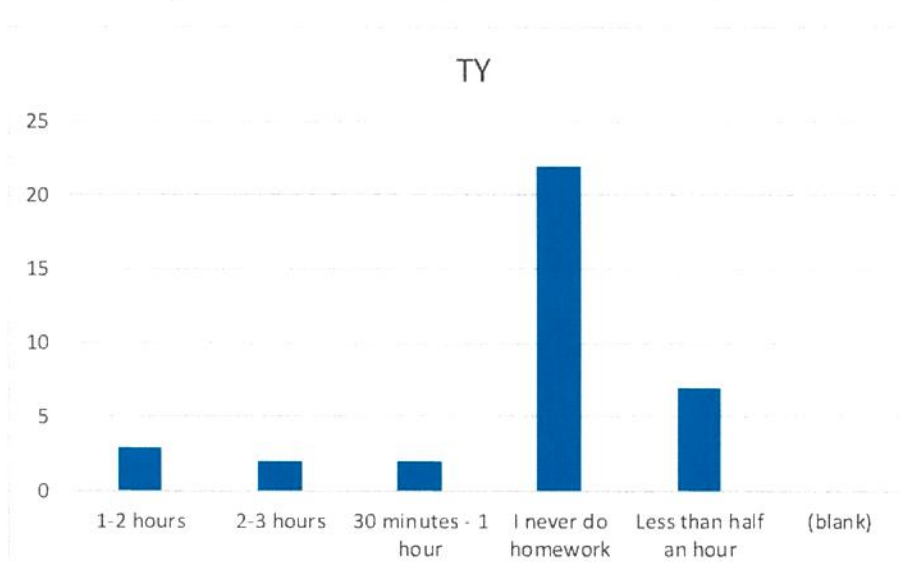
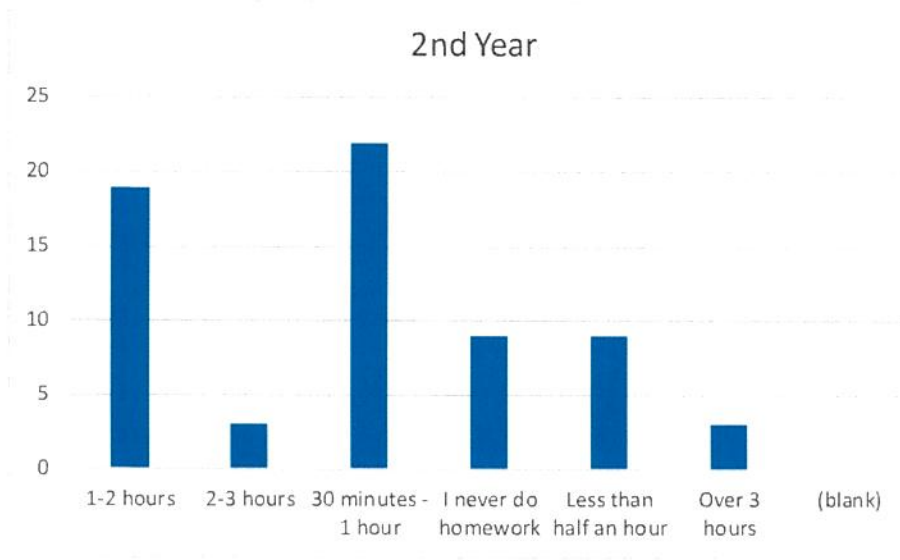


On a scale of 1-10, how much effort do you put into your homework?
10 being the most effort you could put in.

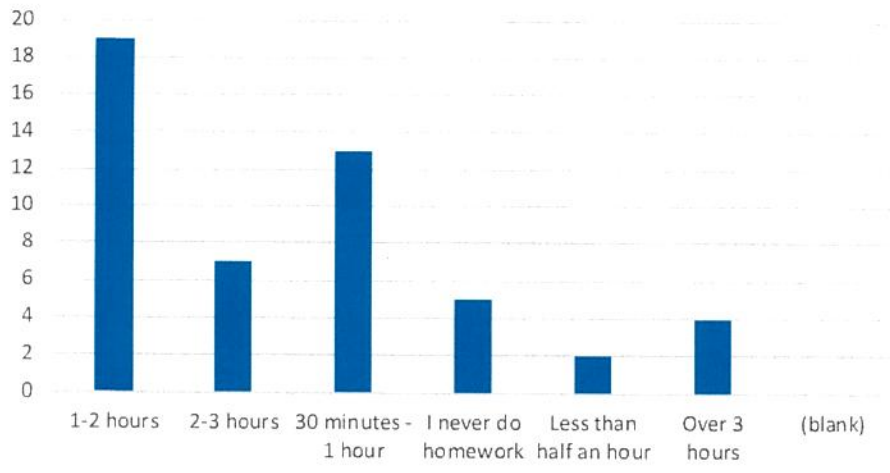


How much time on average do you spend on your homework each day?

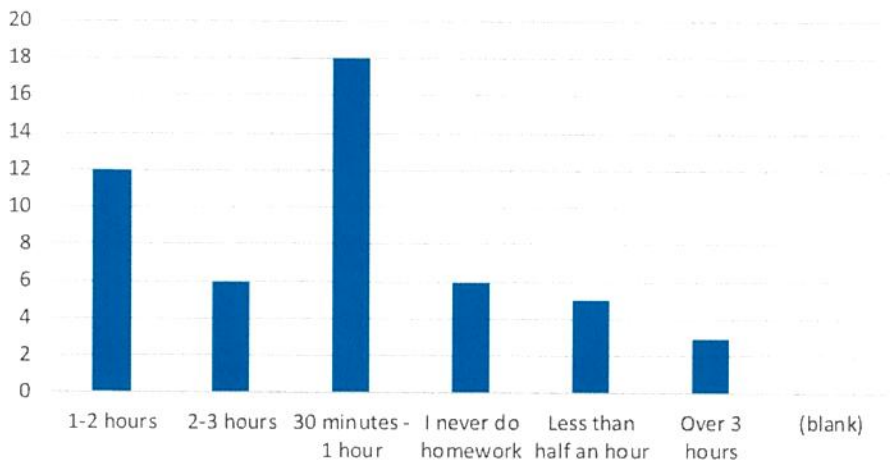




5th Year



6th Year



Question: Any suggestions as to how students could be helped to improve the quality of homework they submit?

Student suggestions:

Make the homework easier
Maybe the teacher can help before giving homework
Have a sorted homework schedule
Talk about the homework for the last 10 minutes of class
Better handwriting.
To put more listening excersice's and documentary's and researching
Have a longer deadline but have a required minimum time on how long they need to do it for/how much they write
Do more on teams
Help start it in class
make it online
Spend more time and listen more in class
Have interesting and fun homework
Fun, interactive homework
To not use hw as a punishment
Less homework so you could add more quality
Do it in a quiet place
A longer time to submit the homework. Maybe one day extra, or due next week.
Have the work explained in class
Change to studying as homework
Don't give us home work every day pls
Don't get bored
Students need to be able to fully understand the homework for it to help with their learning. Otherwise it just confuses them. So there needs to be a good explanation of the homework for it to be helpful to students education.
Tell them there will be a reward if the homework is up to a very good standard
Don't give students so much homework so that we have time to put more effort into less subjects
I think that himework shouldnt exist so we have more time to study
If they were given less in each subject small amounts of homework could be done to a high standard.
More difficult homework with larger due times, this could be corrected and handed back with feedback.
Not as much hw more study
Take Your time when doing it.
Give more homework
Making the homework short and based of what work was done in class
Go library
Do it as soon as you get home to get it over and done with
Spending more time and using a book to help
Power of your phone and leave it downstairs
Don't give us the same questions/topic multiple times e.g. writing the same paragraphs multiple times it's boring
Not gives as much so you vould focus of it or give more study WorK LIKE EXAM PAPERS
Go over the topic before questions so you can complete the question

not long paragraphs or essay writing just simple questions to go over and assist with the topic you are learning in whatever subject this apply to!!!!
Less essay type homework
Give us Friday off
Learning homework helps me the best als essay writing because it allows me to create structured answers.
I feel like in third year there should be more sudy homework given out near the en of the year so they dont stress with homework on top of that
Find a compromise between students and teachers and to reach a balanced agreement between what suits the student the best in terms of time(in some)cases health and what ticks the topics needed to be learned off from the given curriculum (exam questions personally for me)
Focus more and get it done as early as possible
Think about your homework being looked at by teacher/parent etc, u want them to be proud of your work not disappointed.
spend time understanding the questions and reading over your answers to see if they make sense
provide more detail on what needs to be done and motivate students to accomplish more.
Rewards
Less homework but more important hw
I rather chose my homework. I rather do exam papers
Exam questions for junior and leaving cert guidelines
Get given homework at start of week and have more time to do it
Find an quiet place to do your homework
Give less note taking homework, give more worksheet questions for the likes of first, second, and fifth years that can prepare them for the JC and the LC, exam like questions for their level and for third and 6th years give exam questions as homework
After school study
Teacher should properly explain the homework topic
Sent a 2 hour period for homework in a day and stick to it
Homework should only be exam questions
Give more time when assignments are very big.
Use a reward system which rewards students for good homework
Get advice from there teachers
Don't give too much homework. When a student has too much homework, they tend to rush it and not bothered to give full, descriptive answers. But if a student gets a small amount of homework, they will more than likely fill it out properly because they have nothing else to complete.
Rather than one teacher giving loads of homework at once every teacher give a small about for there subject as it can take over spending time doing homework on other subjects then you have to rush other subjects to get it done because you have things to do like training that day
Rather than a teacher giving an large quantity of homework a day give some for the week
Cut down on the homework for lc students to allow them study time
Remove all distractions
listen to the teacher and ask for help
Reading the questions carefully
do it in a quiet space
Try not to take "Phone breaks"
Stop being lazy and just do it

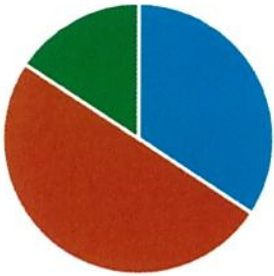
Make it more fun
Don't be lazy just do the work !
They could try harder

3) Teacher Survey results: The following results were submitted anonymously by teachers.

1. How regularly do you check homework?

[More Details](#)

- Every time I set homework 13
- Most of the time 19
- Half of the time 6
- Rarely 0
- Never 0



2. How do you check homework? Tick as many as apply

[More Details](#)

- I spot check a few copies 11
- I ask the class did they do it 9
- I check all copies in the class 31
- I collect it 12
- Other 8



Other ways teachers reported checking homework
Ask the class answers from homework. Those that can answer have done it, those that cannot answer have not.
Really depends on the homework, the plan for the class, time, etc.
We go through the answers in class. Or I check the portfolios, where the piece of work ends up.
Ask individual students for answers
I scan all copies to see that it is done. I ask a few to read out answers.
Give time to correct questions and observe the class. Then go through problems.
I check and sign/stamp ALL students work. Students swap their copies and we go through the answers, students give feedback on their peers work.
I collect the bigger assignments

How would you rate the quality of the homework submitted on a scale of 1-10? (10 being excellent quality)

*results below are the average result from the survey

1st year – 5.72

2nd year – 5.88

3rd year – 6.56

TY – 3.5

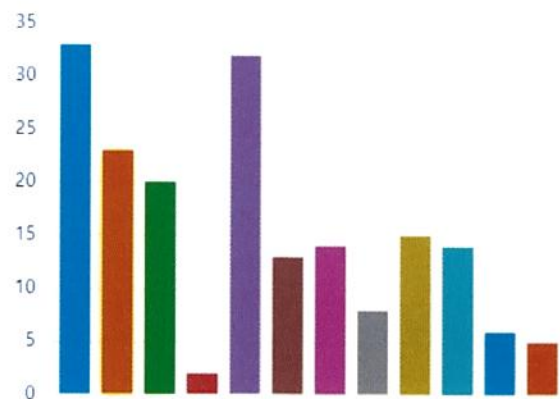
5th year – 5.94

6th year – 5.97

9. What type of homework do you give? Tick as many as apply.

[More Details](#)

● Answering questions from textb...	33
● Worksheet	23
● Essay writing	20
● Aural homework	2
● Exam paper questions	32
● Learning off by heart	13
● Reading	14
● Poster making	8
● Note taking	15
● Project work	14
● Watching a documentary/video	6
● Other	5



Question: Do you have any suggestions as to how we can improve the quality of homework submitted?

Teacher responses:

Exceptional homework tokens - teachers get ten a month to give out. Everyone with a token gets to add it to a drum for a draw at the end of every month.
To encourage pride in student's work, we could begin with a focus on Presentation. This could be emphasised by all teachers. Title, Date, Topic Title, Margins and red pen. This might require teachers having additional equipment in their classroom (rulers, red pens etc) to emphasise the importance of the standard of presentation of their work in class and at home. Then if this step is achieved, our next step could focus or target the quality of exercises produced.
Create a new merit for homework on VShare Have a best homework reward for students
extra attention to detail, reading questions carefully, focus on the concepts
Consistency across the board, especially with NEs and HWs, hard to get students onboard when it's only a few of their teachers following these rules. More intentional homework given with explanations to students. Merits for good examples of homework, I really feel the journal was easier for this.
A note home to parents in the journal / phone call home seems to work. However, if there is an import written task to be done and I want high quality work to be submitted, I assign it as classwork. Some students will never put the same effort in at home as in class. And classwork eliminates the possibility of using AI/Google translate. Recording HWs usually means the students will produce something to avoid the HW but often it's poor quality. The main thing I want students to do at home is study, revise notes and learning work.
Homework standards display posters for each room/sample answers/short clip on the importance of homework
Putting the homework online (like on VShare) parents can then see what homework is given and check the students have done it. Like for primary schools with Aladdin app
In my class I frame great examples of work, tests that get 90%+ or homework which was great quality. There is a light that lights it up.
Homework awards for good quality HW. A merit system for good quality homework which results in a pizza party or free homework passes for students with consistent quality homework.
This could work along side added punishment for HWs. Mandatory extra work for hws etc.
The quality and enthusiasm towards homework definitely seems to drop in the older years maybe caused by not having much homework during TY
Students should be granted additional time to complete homework, extending deadlines to encompass weekends. By providing students with a list of assignments for the week and collecting them the following week, teachers can alleviate the pressure of submitting homework the next day. This approach acknowledges that students often juggle schoolwork with extracurricular activities, potentially sacrificing homework completion to participate in outside interests. Allowing weekend completion enables students to better manage their time, ensuring they can balance academics with their other commitments. While this solution may not suit all students, as some may still neglect homework responsibilities, it offers a practical compromise for those who prioritise extracurricular activities alongside their studies.
I'm not convinced that homework necessarily aids a student's learning. We are told that students should be getting homework all of the time but it's not always the best thing for

<p>the student. I think that one quality assignment per week per subject is ideal for junior Cycle and two for senior Cycle. I think students would submit better quality homework if they weren't overwhelmed with homework (often for no other reason, than it's policy that they get homework.)</p>
<p>Most students don't write down homework, more punishment if not submitted, most students that do not go homework will definitely not complete extra homework, maybe they miss sport or extra curriculum activities instead</p>
<p>Percentage of overall grade/term report card value could come from hw completion/quality?</p>
<p>Time is an issue. Even with 1 hour classes, it is difficult to check the quality of all student' homework. Numbers in classes make it even more difficult- 30 is a lot to try to correct. It is subject specific also, it is easier to correct homework in the likes of Graphs in Maths, Maps in Geography etc. History, English and Business (text heavy subjects) make it harder to correct the quality of all 30 students every time.</p>
<p>Perhaps one bigger/more detailed/project piece of homework should be given each week rather than smaller homework every day. Easier for teachers to correct each week and more detailed feedback can be given.</p>
<p>Stop giving students so much homework. Make parent's aware of their responsibility to check quality of HW.</p>
<p>I think we've picked something too hard to measure. It's subjective and we need to consider it according to every students' ability. I think we've shot ourselves in the foot.</p>
<p>I think that using Office 365 - Teams and OneNote is a great way of keeping on track. Getting students to submit homework digitally makes it much quicker to see who has done the work and who has not. It is also a great way of tracking what students are doing HW very late at night.</p>
<p>A lot of my students complain about how much homework they get on a Monday vs a Tuesday for example where on Mondays they get homework from each class but other days they get no homework at all. I think it would be better to give timed homework, so for example with maths give 3 questions and say it should take no longer than 30 mins to do. This will help with exam timings as well but it is also a form of feedback for the teacher to check in on how well the student is grasping the material being covered</p>
<p>I am concerned by the amount of notes I receive from 1st Year parents excusing students from not having homework done for things like - busy with after school sports, not feeling well last night etc etc etc. I think a new negative note for poor quality homework, or specifically incomplete homework needs to be brought in. Students argue back when you give a HW for poor homework, because "at least it is done". A specific note on VsWare would be able to track students who are consistently doing homework to the minimum. I think a drive on standards is needed. Perhaps the focus could be from Mol an Oige - greater focus on certificates/awards given to academic excellence. I check my homework ALL of the time, and I give in nearly HWs in every class. Students are not catching up on work from extra curricular matches etc.</p>
<p>** I don't teach First Year so gave a 5/10 **</p>
<p>If students are consistently punished for not doing homework/incomplete homework/poor quality homework. I have noticed that students are not always given detentions for HW/NE. There have been times I have given 3/4 notes to students on VsWare and they have not been put on detention, especially if the students are usually well behaved.</p>
<p>Stamps for checking homework given to teachers.</p>
<p>Present teachers with suggestions based on research findings, proven strategies, with low impact on the teacher workload. Carry out study on the effectiveness of homework, as compared to flipped classroom, classwork, etc.</p>

What does this data show us?

The data has been analysed and the information gathered has informed our School Improvement Plan for the 2024/25 academic year. Our criteria for success in our actions to *improve the quality of homework submitted by students* are the following:

1.10% increase in quality reported by teachers for every year group.

2.10% increase in effort reported by students for every year group.

Before Actions:

Average quality reported by teachers on a scale of 1 to 10
1 st year – 5.72
2 nd year – 5.88
3 rd year – 6.56
TY – 3.5
5 th year – 5.94
6 th year – 5.97

The average reported effort for each year group
1 st year – 6.87
2 nd year – 5.83
3 rd year – 6.93
TY – 4.42
5 th year – 6.66
6 th year – 5.76

Our Improvement Plan

Ardgillan College 2024/25

Timeframe of this improvement plan is from September 2024 to December 2024-to be reviewed on a continuous basis

Target	Actions	Persons / groups responsible	Criteria for success	Progress and adjustments	Targets achieved
To improve the quality of homework submitted by students	Teachers will check and review homework every time it's set (stamps included in teacher packs).	Class teachers	Increase teacher's perception of quality of homework submitted by a minimum of 10% in every year group.		
	Homework expectations are set out in the teacher and student journal for guidance.	SSE Team	10% increase in effort reported by students.		
	Homework expectations clearly set out on a poster for all classrooms.	L&T Team SSE Team			
	HW is consistently recorded on VSware for students who don't submit quality homework.	Class teachers			
	Assign homework that students find most helpful for their learning (textbook questions, worksheets, exam paper questions, note taking).	Class teachers			

	Journals will be checked in assembly each morning by class tutor (checking homework is recorded and parents signature).	Class tutors			
	All students will receive study skills and homework workshop.	Academic Attainment Coordinator and TY students			
	Inform all parents of homework expectations and their responsibility to check students are doing their h.w.	Year heads			
	Ensure all 1 st year students have access to online books in September.	L&T team, 1 st Year Head			
	Ensure students who are going in trips/ extra-curricular are finding out what homework they missed and catching up.	Year heads and coaches			
	All students will record their homework in their journal each day.	Students, class teachers, class tutors, year heads			
	Students have their journals open on their desks for the whole lesson	Class Teacher			

Target

To improve the quality of homework submitted by students:

1.10% increase in the average quality reported by teachers for every year group.

2.10% increase in the average effort reported by students for every year group.

Actions to achieve Target

Actions	Who	When
1. Teachers will check and review homework every time it's set (stamps included in teacher packs).	Class Teacher	Ongoing
2. Homework expectations are set out in the teacher and student journal for guidance.	SSE Team	Pre academic year 2024/25
3. Homework expectations clearly set out on a poster for all classrooms.	L&T Team, SSE Team	September 2024
4. HW is consistently recorded on VSware for students who don't submit quality homework.	Class Teacher	Ongoing
5. Assign homework that students find most helpful for their learning	Class Teacher	Ongoing

(textbook questions, worksheets, exam paper questions, note taking).		
6. All students will record their homework in their journal each day.	Class Teacher, Class Tutor, Year-Heads	Ongoing and checked daily
7. Journals will be checked in assembly each morning by class tutor (checking homework is recorded and parents signature).	Class tutors	Daily
8. All students will receive study skills and homework workshop.	Academic attainment co-ordinator.	Start of the academic year 2024/25
9. Inform all parents of homework expectations and their responsibility to check students are doing their h.w.	Year-Heads	September 2024
10. Ensure all 1 st year students have access to online books in September.	L&T team	September 2024
11. Ensure students who are going in trips/ extra-curricular are finding out what homework they missed and catching up.	Year-Heads	Fortnightly, DP announcements.
12. Students have their journals open on their desks for the whole lesson	Class Teacher	Daily

Monitoring Target

Monitoring Action	Who	When
1. Whole staff anonymous survey at the end of semester 1.	SSE team	End of semester 1
2. Whole student survey at the end of semester 1.	SSE team	End of semester 1
3. 2 x HW's is a detention.	Year Heads	Weekly
4. Journal check every morning at assembly.	Class tutors	Daily