

Homework Policy

Rationale

Homework provides an opportunity for pupils to work independently, to practise skills learned in school, to reflect on their understanding of a topic or to pursue in some depth and over time a particular area of study. It strengthens the educational partnership between parents, pupils and teachers. It is therefore important that each department's homework policy reflects the aims of the school.

Purposes

Homework fulfils a variety of purposes:

- To develop independent study skills and increase study time.
- To practice skills learned in class and to reflect on or complete work started in class.
- To consolidate learning
- To read and write for a variety of purposes.
- To prepare for tests and examinations.
- To provide various types of work in order to assess an individual's progress.
- To pursue an in depth study of a topic over a period of time.

Guidelines

- Homework should be planned and, ideally, issued at the beginning of class and displayed on the whiteboard. This is particularly important for KS3 and KS4 pupils.
- Teachers should insist that pupils use the homework diary to record homework
- Homework should not ordinarily be a "finishing off" exercise. Where such tasks are issued they should be brief.
- Homework tasks should be manageable for the pupil – not excessively long or repetitive and afforded an appropriate amount of time so that pupils are able to manage their homework effectively
- Homework tasks should provide challenge and develop learning.
- Pupils prefer not to have homework set when tests are imminent as they cannot easily give sufficient attention to both.

Time spent: In order to achieve their full potential all pupils need to commit to spending significant time completing set homework, revising the work covered in class. More senior pupils should also begin to do more independent study and reading in each of their subjects.

Accordingly,

- In Year 8 and 9 a pupil should spend on average about 7-10 hours per week on homework / study
- In Year 10 pupils should spend 10-12 hours per week.
- In Years 11-12 pupils will need to increase this to 10-15 hours per week
- At A level a successful pupil should expect to have to commit to 15 – 20 hours per week

Pupils should be aware that homework and study requirements can vary across the year. At KS4, when preparing for Controlled Assessment Tasks, pupils may need to increase the time devoted to study so as to maximise their GCSE grade.

After – school study facilities are available from 3:30 – 5:00 and for older pupils, until 6.00

For all Year groups the amount of time devoted to study will increase in advance of examinations.

On setting homework, the teacher should give pupils an indication of the amount of time they are expected to spend on it and this should be recorded in the Homework Diary with the homework.

Role of parents

Parents should be encouraged to use the Homework Diary to monitor homework and to comment on any aspect of it. Parents are also encouraged to regularly monitor their child's progress as recorded in the Assessment Booklet.

Role of departments/teachers

Each department should have a clear policy on homework outlining the time to be spent, the variety and type of tasks to be set as well as the marking and assessment procedures to be followed.

Role of Form Teacher

Form teachers play an important role in ensuring the success of our homework policy and are in the best position to deal with homework problems. The form tutor should regularly check homework diaries to ensure that homework is being completed and to alert colleagues if there appears to be an issue with quantity or timing of homework.

Form Tutors should periodically survey their class to determine whether the amount of time spent on homework aligns with school expectations. This can be done by checking the recorded times against each homework set.

Pupils may need guidance and support on how to self-manage, particularly when they are involved in a lot of extra-curricular activities.

If a form tutor feels that his/her class has a genuine grievance he/she can

(a) inform the Year Head who will discuss the issue with the class teacher or ask the relevant vice principal to do so.

(b) discuss with the class teacher directly.

Expectations of the pupil

- Homework should always be recorded in the homework diary
- Homework should always be completed on time and to the best standard possible. The recommended amount of time should be spent on it.
- Pupils are expected to complete homework that has not been completed either on time or to the correct standard and may be detained at lunch time or after school to complete such work under supervised conditions
- Where pupils have difficulty completing homework at home, they are advised to make use of supervised study facilities in the school from 3:30 – 5pm each day.
- Where pupils have missed homework or other classwork due to illness they must catch up on this work.
- Where a pupil knows in advance that he or she will be absent from class due to an appointment or an extra-curricular activity it is the pupil's responsibility to find out in advance what work, including homework, they will miss and to have it completed for the following day.

Appendix 1

Catching up on missed work:

In cases of long term absence, this will be facilitated by Mrs Guilfoyle, who will arrange to have work sent home.

In the case of short term absence, the pupil is responsible for catching up on his or her own work. The subject teacher is responsible for ensuring that the pupil knows what work to do.

The subject teacher should check that the work has been completed.

Where pupils have been out of class for extra-curricular activities, it is the responsibility of the organising teacher to:

(i) emphasise to the pupils their responsibility to find out in advance what work they will miss and to have it completed for the following day.

(ii) to liaise with the subject teacher to check that the work has been completed.

(iii) to maintain a record of pupils in their extra-curricular group who fail to catch up on work and to exclude them from the activity until work is completed. This can only be done if the subject teacher relays the information to the organising teacher.

It is the responsibility of the pupil to inform subject teachers of the forthcoming absence and to write down what work, including homework, they will miss and to complete it for the following day.

Appendix 2

Pupil survey: What our pupils tell us about homework

They learn most from exercise that involve:

- Writing exercises
- Questions about work completed that day
- Past paper questions
- Structured research exercises related to the topic they are studying
- Revision exercises

They learn least from homework exercises that involve:

- Reading and speaking exercises
- Finishing off exercises that were started in class
- Rewriting notes and essays

Most of our pupils are devoting considerable time to homework and most see the value of it.

Some pupils who are involved with extra-curricular activities both during and after school find it difficult keep up with homework tasks.