

HOMEWORK POLICY



Any definition of homework must cover a range of activities but recognise the common features. Homework refers to learning that:

- is relevant to curriculum objectives
- takes place beyond the classroom
- is the responsibility of the pupil

As defined, homework is regarded by staff as an integral part of the teaching, learning and assessment procedures for all pupils.

Purposes of Homework

- to allow practice of work done in class and to reinforce pupils' understanding of key issues
- to create opportunities for the application of skills, knowledge and values introduced in the classroom
- to allow preparation for future class work
- to provide opportunities for independent work and to encourage responsibility for learning
- to help pupils develop skills of planning and organising time and to encourage self-discipline and positive study habits
- to provide pupils with the opportunity to achieve success
- to allow assessment of pupils' understanding of work
- to enable teachers to assess the effectiveness of teaching methods
- to provide opportunities for parental co-operation and support

Nature and Range of Homework

While acknowledging the great variety of homework tasks that may be set, it is accepted that homework must have a clear relationship to classroom activity. It is also desirable that a variety of strategies is used to ensure that homework is varied in the type of demands it makes on the individual pupil over a period of time.

Strategies may include:

- preparation in advance of a unit of work
- ongoing coursework/projects running parallel to class work
- completion of class work
- learning material in preparation for an assessment
- engaging in research
- carrying out a reading task

Differentiation in Homework

In general, subject departments will practise differentiation by task, resource and/or outcome. Therefore, some homework will be differentiated via the nature of the task set or the resources used whereas other homework will be open-ended with opportunities for response at different levels and for individual interpretation and style of presentation.

Management of Homework

Homework diaries are provided for all pupils to record details of homework set and the date for completion.

(i) Time Allocation

It is recognised that the speed and method of working will vary from individual to individual and that it is not possible to be prescriptive in allocation of time.

In Key Stage 3 where pupils are all taking the same subjects, homework timetables are constructed to ensure that no pupil has an unreasonable amount of homework to complete on any one night. The following guidelines with regard to time are recommended:

Year 8	1 hour per evening
Year 9	1 hour 30 minutes per evening
Year 10	1 hour 45 minutes per evening

At Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 there is an increase in the amount of time required for homework which takes into account the time needed to achieve coursework requirements. However, the principle that homework should not impose an excessive burden will determine the amount of homework set.

The following guidelines are recommended:

Years 11-12 10 hours per week

Year 13-14 12 hours per week
(in addition to time spent in Private Study periods in Study Room)

No specific homework timetable can be provided for Years 13 & 14 pupils taking different combinations of subjects, therefore these post 16 students must take greater responsibility for their own studies. Homework deadlines should be fair and realistic.

(ii) Expectations of Pupils

All pupils are expected to make a determined effort to complete homework. If any difficulties arise with the work, they should seek further explanation from the member of staff concerned. Each pupil must understand what they are doing in order to benefit from completion of the homework set.

Pupils are expected to be honest in their completion of homework. Copying from another pupil or getting anyone else to complete the work is unacceptable.

Homework must be completed by the date specified. If not, staff may request a note explaining why the homework has not been completed on time. Repeated failure to complete homework on time will lead to sanctions such as detention. Parents will be informed if homework is not being produced on a regular basis.

Corrections should be done as required and homework which is careless and untidy may need to be repeated.

Homework books, files and diaries must be kept in a presentable condition.

Use of ICT and the Internet in Homework

As computers and the use of the Internet have become a major feature of everyday life, so the opportunities to integrate the use of ICT into homework tasks has increased. In response to this, school has increased access to computers after school hours. It is the policy of the school to encourage the developing ICT skills through the completion of homework but with the following provisos:

- (i) Pupils without a computer at home should not feel disadvantaged in any way.
- (ii) Advice will be given to pupils with regard to the use of ICT and Internet research in the completion of homework.

Role of Parents

Homework is part of the wider process of building home-school partnerships. Parents need to be aware of the needs of their children in terms of time and location to do homework effectively. The most important contribution parents can make is to take an interest in the work their children are doing, offer encouragement and support at all times and to contact the school if persistent problems arise. The school undertakes through parents' evenings to give more specific advice as appropriate.

Assessment of Homework

Teachers will use a variety of methods of assessment appropriate to the task set.

Pupils will be given clear guidance in terms of what is expected of them. Each subject department has in place its own assessment policy in relation to homework within their departmental policy and handbook. There should be consistency on this within the department and the system should be made clear to the pupils.

All written work to be assessed will be returned to pupils as quickly as possible.

Pupils will be made aware of how to improve and reach the standards required through quality marking (Assessment for Learning).

Record-Keeping

Records of homework assessment will be retained by staff. These will be used to keep staff, pupils and parents informed of progress, to assess each pupil's performance in relation to teaching and year groups, to identify areas of strength and weakness in pupils' work and to measure the effectiveness of the teaching and learning strategies in place.

Homework assessments may be used for pupil tracking.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is recognised that the procedures laid down need to be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis. This may be done through regular checking of Homework Diaries by House Teachers and sampling of homework completed by different year groups by the Principal or other senior staff.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.