

Homework Policy

Rationale

Where possible homework should be regarded as an integral part of pupils' courses. As a pupil progresses from S1 to S6, there may be an alteration in emphasis but, as with all learning, there will be continuity in process. Homework completed by pupils should be marked or assessed by the most appropriate method and necessary feedback given to the pupils. They should be informed of their progress and suggestions for improvement made if necessary.

What is homework for?

Careful thought must be given to the reasons for issuing homework, some of which are listed below.

- To consolidate work done in class.
- To allow preparation for future class work.
- To offer access to resources not available in school.
- To develop skills in using libraries and other learning resources.
- To provide opportunities for individualised work.
- To provide evidence for the evaluation of teaching.
- To train pupils in planning and organising time.
- To develop self discipline.
- To encourage responsibility for learning.
- To provide information for parents.
- To provide opportunities for home/school parental links and support.
- To assist in making rapid progress in learning.
- **Homework is never a punishment.**

Types of homework

There are four main types of homework:

- Planned tasks/Preparation for class work - tasks may be planned at the beginning of the year or term as an integral aspect of class work.
- Spontaneous work - may arise from an idea which the teacher or class has and pupils tend to be more enthusiastic about this type of work.
- Self-contained work - a discrete piece of work running parallel to class work.
- Finishing off - homework consists of finishing-off work begun in the classroom. *Note that this is the least favoured type.*
 - Study of material already taught in class for the purposes of consolidation and in preparation for assessment

Differentiation

Differentiation is a term for a range of strategies used to ensure that each pupil is doing appropriate work. It is as important in homework as in class work because a sense of achievement is a vital element in building up self esteem. Different strategies are used to suit pupils and tasks.

- Differentiation by outcome - the teacher gives a task which is open-ended and is within the capabilities of all pupils. There will be differentiation in responses. Able pupils can be stretched while less able can complete the task at their level.
- Differentiation by support - the task may be the same for all pupils but the level of support may vary. Teacher produced support may be available at different levels and the outcomes may vary but less so than the example above.
- Differentiation by task - a range of tasks may be given on the basis of interests in that particular area of study. Motivation and interests might be stronger influences on achievement than the ability of pupils.

Learning Support staff have a key role to play in looking at homework tasks with subject departments.

Note: Some pupils will be able to complete a task in 15 minutes while others may take nearly an hour to complete the same task.

Evaluation of homework tasks

A suitable checklist for departments to evaluate homework tasks is the following:

| Is this homework task | Yes | No |
|--|------------|-----------|
| • likely to enhance course/class work? | | |
| • differentiated by task or outcome? | | |
| • within pupils', or home, resources? | | |
| • likely to engage interest and enjoyment? | | |
| • clear in purpose? | | |
| • clear in instructions? | | |
| • likely to enhance learning/study skills? | | |

Departmental policy

- Each department to have a written Policy on Homework.
- The rationale in this policy to be considered in the development of Dept. Policy.
- A statement on Duration and Frequency of homework to be included.
- A statement on differentiation and meeting the needs of pupils to be included.
- Homework to be an integral part of any curriculum development.
- Homework to be checked and marked as required.

Duration and frequency of homework

The tables below give an indication of the frequency and the time which should be spent on homework for each subject.

S1/2 - 5 hours weekly to include revision for assessments

| Subject | Frequency | Duration |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Art | Every 2-3 weeks | 30 - 60mins. |
| Design &Tech. | Weekly | 30 mins. |
| English | Weekly | 20 mins. |
| French | Weekly | 20 - 30 mins. |
| Geography | Every 2 weeks | 30 mins. |
| History | Weekly | 20 mins. |
| Home Economics | Every 2 weeks | 30 mins. |
| ICT | | |
| Maths | Weekly | 30 mins. |
| Music | | |
| PE | | |
| RME | Monthly | 30mins. |
| Science | Every 2 weeks | 30 mins |

S3/4 - 5 -7 hours per week to include revision for assessments

Foundation level pupils should study for the lower amount of time while Credit level pupils will require at least 7 hours

| Subject | Frequency | Duration |
|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Admin | Weekly | 30 – 45 mins. |
| Art | Every 2-3 weeks | 60 mins. |
| Computing | Weekly | 60 mins |
| Craft&Design/Graph Com. | Weekly | 45 mins. |
| English | Weekly | 30 mins. |
| French/German | Weekly | 30-45 mins. |
| Geog./History | Weekly | 60 mins. |
| Home Economics | Weekly | 20-30 mins. |
| Maths | Weekly | 30 mins. |
| Music | Weekly | 30 mins. |
| PE | Weekly | 30 mins. |
| RME | | |
| Science(Biol. Phy., Chem.) | Weekly | 60 – 90 mins. |

S5/6 Higher Still - 10 hours weekly

Maximum - 2 hours for each subject per week

General Information

- The recommended weekly total is an approximation as longer time will be required for revision before assessments.
- Pupils should have adequate notice of homework deadlines - **one week if possible** – particularly in the senior school where extended pieces of writing are given.
- Pupils in S5/6 may be able to plan their own study and revision time but monitoring is required.
- General information will be included in the school prospectus and in course booklets.
- S1 pupils will receive written information from each subject during P7 Induction week.

How does the school help pupils organize their homework?

- There is a Homework Club four nights per week from 3.30pm until 4.30pm.
- All pupils are encouraged to attend Homework Club where help can be given if required.
- All pupils are supplied with a Homework Diary at the beginning of each session.
- A note of all homework is entered in the pupils' Homework Diary.
- The diary must be signed each week by the parent or carer.
- The homework diary is checked on a weekly basis by Guidance staff.
- Pupils who do not have their diaries signed are seen by the Head Teacher.
- Pupils who fail to do homework are listed in weekly department minutes.
- The department lists are collated weekly by a member of the Guidance team and are scrutinised by SMT.
- Repeated offenders are encouraged to attend the Homework Club.
- Homework letters are issued to parents by SMT after consultation with subject depts. and Guidance.

Failure to complete homework

- Class teacher speaks to pupils about reasons for non completion of work.
- If first time, a new deadline for completion is set.
- Failure to meet this deadline results in PT being informed.
- Still unresolved, SMT are informed and letter may be sent home or pupils are asked to attend Homework Club.

Note: Consequence of new Homework Policy will result in letters being sent by SMT only after consultation with subject depts.. and Guidance.

Quality Assurance

- Homework diaries will be monitored for timing and frequency of homework.
- Parents of alternate year groups to be surveyed.
- Depts will be consulted on a yearly basis to review implementation of the policy.
- A short homework policy statement to be submitted by each dept.