



## Homework and Marking Philosophy Year 3-13

### Homework

#### 1. Purpose: Why we set homework

Research shows that homework has a positive impact on pupil success. It achieves this in many ways. By encouraging a life-long love of learning and the development of an independent work ethic, good work routines and habits are developed. It helps to support and reinforce learning done in the classroom and allows teachers to assess progress and plan effectively. It is a useful way to develop communication between parents and children about school work.

#### 2. Quantity and completion deadlines: How much we set and how long students have to do it

Research also suggests that setting too much is counter-productive. It can lead to increased stress, sleep deprivation and other health problems and a reduction in time available for friends, family and co-curricular pursuits. Below is a guide to how much students should expect to receive:

School Section	Year Group	Average amount set per night
Junior	Year 3	No more than 20 minutes
	Year 4	No more than 25 minutes
	Year 5	No more than 30 minutes
	Year 6	No more than 30 minutes
Senior	Year 7	40 minutes
	Year 8	60 minutes
	Year 9	80 minutes
	Year 10	90 minutes
	Year 11	No more than 120 minutes (to include revision)
Sixth Form	Year 12	4 hours/subject/week (to include independent reading)
	Year 13	5 hours/subject/week (to include use of study periods)

Senior School and Sixth Form students should not routinely be asked to do homework overnight as they may have school or outside commitments which make that impossible. Staff should aim to give students **at least two school days** (ie homework set on Friday should not be due before Tuesday) but ideally longer when the timetable and fall of lessons permits. In the Junior School however students will be expected to complete work on the evening set.

When staff set a specific revision homework they will endeavour to carry out the test on the day agreed.

At certain times of the year there may be no formal homework set, for example during Junior School performance weeks and before internal exams for Year 7 and 8.

### **3. Frequency: Homework timetables**

We publish homework timetables in Year 3 - 9 to help both staff and students plan their workload. These are given to students and posted on the parent portal. Due to the nature of the work and the options structure, as well as a desire to help develop the skill of time management, we do not publish formal homework timetables above Year 9. In Year 10 students should be set no more than 45 minutes work per subject per week and in Year 11 no more than 1 hour per subject per week. This helps to prepare them for homework patterns in the Sixth Form.

Students are expected to record the detail of homework, including the due date, in their planner. In the younger years tutors will ask parents to sign the planner regularly to acknowledge that homework has been completed.

### **4. Non-submission: Late and poor quality homework**

Teachers can reasonably expect all work to be handed in by the due date. It is expected that any problems regarding completion of homework are communicated to teachers well in advance of the deadline set. Students should not expect work submitted later than this to be marked. Staff should utilise the sanctions system if work is persistently submitted late, or is of a poor quality or unfinished. Students can expect to be asked to re-do homework which is below expectation in order to support progress.

### **5. Holiday homework**

We would not expect students in non-public exam years to be set specific written holiday work, with the exception of the Year 9 and Year 10 end of year exams. They are children and need a rest, just like teachers do.

### **6. Style: Different types of homework task**

There are a wide variety of meaningful and relevant homework tasks which staff might set, depending on both their subject and the age of the pupil. It is acknowledged that the best homework is that which is planned, varied, focused and clearly (in the minds of students) integrated with what happens in the classroom. It further helps if there is a variety of levels of challenge within the work or if the pupil has an element of choice in the topic/title or method of submission.



Some subjects lend themselves to certain types of homework more than others, and as students prepare for public examinations (Year 10 onwards) the nature of homework will change, dictated by the demands of exam board specifications.

Here is a selection of the types of homework a pupil might be set which can be categorised under three broad headings of *preparation* (engaging with new material), *practising* (based on previously taught material) and *extension* (expanding beyond what has already been

learned). Homework can also be differentiated by who it is set for: all students, by group or individualised.

### **Whole class**

- Preparing for a specific lesson eg reading how to carry out a particular experiment
- Watching a video - in preparation for a lesson
- Engaging in independent research - on a current or future topic
- Guided reading – fiction or non-fiction
- Making detailed notes from reading or synthesising an article into a few key bullet points
- Writing assignments
- Online work eg MyMaths, Kerboodle
- Revising for a test
- Practising a particular skill
- Reviewing by reading back through work and acting on teacher comments
- Creative activities eg building a model of a volcano, designing a poster

### **Group**

- Rehearsing a performance
- Producing a presentation

### **Individual**

- Students are set individual work based on their own needs eg coursework in Art, Music or DT
- Learning lines
- Reflecting on material learned and bringing back a series of questions
- Watching any film in a target language, going to see a play, visiting a gallery or museum
- An element of choice (of topic and/or timing) eg English Independent Reading Scheme

## **7. Differentiation: How we cater for those with special education needs**

For those on the SEN register staff may receive extra guidance about the nature of homework and any allowances that may need to be made through the students' Individual Educational Plan. Further advice is provided in Appendix 1.

For the more able or interested it is important not to cap their ambitions, nor should they just be given more of the same work to do. They need to be provided with interesting and challenging extension work, whether that be through activity or perhaps just through outcome.

## 8. Independent Learning

If students have completed all the work set but still have time there are three types of activity that they could engage in which promote an element of independence. The first is to **review** work done previously which just may involve reading through notes taken in lessons to ensure that they fully understood them. This process of *reflection* may identify areas of less than complete understanding which the pupil can take back to their teacher. Secondly students can do extra **practice**, which can vary from answering past papers to time on their musical instrument. The latest research emphasises the power of practice over the myth of talent. The final thing they can do is **read around** subjects that they enjoy, whether that be within their textbooks, getting a book from the school library or through online sources like newspapers and journals. This *super-curricular* extension may not only help them decide what subjects or careers to pursue in later life, but also support them in being selected onto the most competitive courses at university.

## 9. Faculty or Department Policy

Each Faculty or Department has developed a specific *Homework and Marking Policy* which is in line with the overall school philosophy.

## Marking

Homework and marking are intrinsically linked, however it is not only homework that is marked. Teachers will also mark classwork as well as formal summative assessments like trial and end of year exams.

Effective marking is an essential part of the education process. At its heart, it is an interaction between teacher and pupil: a way of acknowledging students' work, checking the outcomes and making decisions about what teachers and students need to do next, with the primary aim of driving pupil progress.

There has been much discussion over the past year about marking leading to the publication of two key documents by the Department for Education and the Education Endowment Foundation which have helped to formulate this philosophy.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reducing-teacher-workload-marking-policy-review-group-report>

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-marking-review-responding-to-feedback/>

## Types of assessment



*Assessment for learning* is where the **formative** feedback is designed to help the pupil become a more active learner. Assessment can be based on a variety of information sources (e.g. folder work, class and homework, teacher observation or conversation). Verbal or written feedback to the pupil is primarily descriptive and emphasizes strengths, identifies challenges, and points to next steps. As teachers check on understanding they adjust their lesson planning to keep students on track. Few grades or scores are given - record-

keeping is primarily descriptive. This occurs throughout the learning process, from the outset of the course of study to the time of summative assessment.

*Assessment of learning* is normally accompanied by a **summative** mark or letter grade and attempts to determine a pupil's level of understanding compared to a set of standards. It normally occurs at the end of a unit of work and provides a result which can be communicated to students and their parents.

### **Styles of marking**

There are a variety of styles that staff may utilise, depending on the nature of work and whether the focus of the work was assessment **for** learning, or **of** learning.

Some work may just need **light touch** checking for completeness where a teacher ticks or initials, and dates it.

**Targeted** marking happens when only particular skills or knowledge, perhaps agreed in advance, are commented on by the teacher.

**Focused** marking includes written feedback to students on what was done well and specific and actionable targets for what needs working on, and may or may not include a score or grade (research suggest that students tend to focus disproportionately on the grade when provided alongside written comments and they are less likely to take note of the formative advice offered).

Some subjects/topics may provide more **verbal** than written feedback which students may be expected to record, whilst others will lend themselves to **peer-** and/or **self-assessment** (eg using traffic lights to indicate understanding or marking with guidance sheets/mark schemes and exemplar work so students identify their own success and points for development).

We believe that two principles underpin effective marking: it should be meaningful and motivating.



**Meaningful:** marking varies by age group, subject, and what works best for the pupil and teacher in relation to any particular piece of work. Teachers are encouraged to adjust their approach as necessary and trusted to incorporate the outcomes into subsequent planning and teaching.

**Motivating:** Marking should help to motivate students to progress. An important element of marking is to acknowledge the work a pupil has done, to value their efforts and achievement, and to celebrate progress. However this may at times need balancing by constructive criticism.

In order for marking to be both meaningful and motivating, students must take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers shouldn't correct a pupil's work where they have merely made a careless mistake, just highlight the error. Instead, research advises teachers to focus on areas where students show an underlying misunderstanding. This may be best addressed by providing hints or questions which lead students to underlying principles. Students are taught and encouraged to check their own work and to understand the success criteria, presented in an age appropriate way, so that they can complete work to the highest standard.

**Mr M R Price, Deputy Head (Academic)**

**Mr M Capuano, Junior School Director of Studies**

## **Appendix 1: Advice to teachers on supporting students on the SEN register**

- A. Teachers are issued with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each pupil on the SEN register which provides specific guidance on appropriate adjustments that they should consider in order to support the pupil's learning.
- B. Some students will receive extra time in public exams. It may be appropriate that these students are set the same amount of work as their peers but are expected to take extra time to complete it. Alternatively based on either the nature of the piece of work, the subject or the particular pupil needs, they may be asked to complete less (eg start at Question 5 out of 10 or attempt alternate questions) but within the same time that is allocated to their peers.
- C. More generic advice:
  - encourage good organisational skills e.g. set prep to go through book checking notes complete, glued in, in order etc;
  - encourage the use of ICT;
  - help to establish good study skills e.g. highlighting, colour-coding, summary notes;
  - communicate regularly with the Academic support teacher and with home if relevant.

## **Appendix 2: Advice to students on homework**

1. Be aware of the published homework timetable (where appropriate) and expect homework to be set in accordance with this.
2. Try to follow the published timetable as closely as possible in order to ensure your workload is balanced. Where individual circumstances preclude this, endeavour to redress the balance as soon as possible.
3. Adhere to deadlines set by subject teachers. If you anticipate a problem in doing this, you should alert the subject teacher when the work is set or at least 24 hours before it is due.
4. Raise concern when homework is being set outside the structure of the published timetable or with unreasonably short deadlines with your tutor.
5. Undertake homework in a conscientious manner but remain wary of the total time spent on homework. If a task demands significantly more or less time than the homework timetable suggests it should, this should be raised with the relevant subject teacher.
6. Understand that it is more beneficial to come to school well rested than to exhaust yourself by staying up late to finish a piece of homework. Manage your time wisely to avoid this behaviour becoming a habit.
7. Value the opportunity homework provides to consolidate and extend your knowledge and understanding.
8. Pursue personal interests, academic or otherwise, as you are able alongside the undertaking of homework, maintaining a healthy balance of activities.

### **Appendix 3: Advice to parents on homework**

1. Please be aware of the expectations of students as outlined above and support them in managing their time carefully and sensibly.
2. Understandably, many parents will wish to monitor their child's homework, and perhaps help them with it. However, it is generally agreed that the positive effects of homework are lost when the parent plays too large a part in the planning or execution of homework.
3. The most helpful thing for parents to do is to ensure that the pupil has sufficient space and time set aside in which to work; that distractions are kept to a minimum; and that students do not get into the habit of spending too much or too little time on homework. If a pupil has not completed the task in the allocated time it is acceptable to stop with a note from the parent in the planner.
4. Most effective is when parents work alongside their children on their own homework, whatever this might be. This sets a good example and fosters a good attitude towards independent work.