

Homework Policy

RATIONALE

Research supports the view that students who complete homework outperform those who do not. It can improve students' study skills, improve their attitude towards school and demonstrate that learning can take place outside formal schooling.

Homeworks are set primarily to:

- Develop the habit of independent study
- Reinforce and extend what has happened in the classroom
- Build on the Assessment for Learning Approach used in the classroom
- Provide an indication of student progress
- Help prepare students for future lessons and assessments

AIMS

- To promote learning outside of lesson time as an essential part of a good education, helping students to achieve their full potential
- To develop student responsibility by encouraging independent learning
- To encourage life long learning

TEACHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Teachers should set regular, meaningful and appropriate homework tasks. Teachers should provide sufficient guidance on any homework set, and allocate an appropriate period of time for the homework to be completed thus encouraging the development of good time management skills.

Homework should be marked promptly and accurately and in accordance with subject department guidelines. For Key Stage 3 students, guidance should include the length of time the homework task should take.

Feedback should be given in a way that lets students know:

- how well they have done;
- how they can improve.

Depending on the type of homework set, feedback may be in the form of written comments or annotation. On other occasions it may be in the shape of verbal comments to individual students, or whole class discussions on aspects of the homework.

HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

The amount and nature of homework set varies according to the subject and the Year Group. Homework should be related to work that students are doing in their lessons and take account of the range of abilities of those students.

Examples of homework activities include:

- reading;
- essay writing;
- summarising;
- learning;
- preparing a presentation;
- carrying out research;
- listening to a podcast;
- making something;
- participating in an online discussion group;
- revising;
- answering examination questions;
- analysing model answers and examiners' reports;
- catching up on work missed due to absence from lessons.

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Each student should use their Day Book to record details of homeworks set and to help ensure that deadlines are met. The Day Book should be brought to every lesson and the following practices must be observed:

- all entries are to be made in ink on the date the homework is given;
- the date that the homework is due should also be recorded;
- Day Books should be kept neat and tidy;
- parents should sign Day Books at the end of each week.

It is also the responsibility of every student to ensure that they catch up as soon as possible with any work missed through absence from class.

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR HOMEWORK

It is expected that students in Key Stage 4 and Post 16 will spend an increased amount of time on homework and private study each evening, as a guideline students should spend approximately 2 – 3 hours in home study.

When students move into the **Sixth Form** there should be a greater emphasis on independent study as students start to prepare themselves for life after school, and for the great majority, a university education.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Parental involvement with homework can be an effective way for students, especially younger students, to improve their learning. It can give parents a firsthand idea of what students are learning and how well their daughter is doing in school. However, it can also have a negative impact on learning; for example, if the parent ends up completing the homework task instead of the student.

Parents can help by:

- assisting teachers to monitor homework by signing the Day Book or completed work if requested;
- checking Day Books for notes left by teachers, either to compliment students on the quality of their homework or to alert parents that homework has not been well done;
- taking an active interest in homework;
- ensuring that there is time set aside for homework;
- encouraging and supporting students to complete homework providing, where possible, a dedicated place for homework;
- communicating with teachers any concerns about the nature of homework and their daughter's approach to homework;
- encouraging their daughter to read and take an interest in current affairs; alerting the school to any extenuating circumstances which may need to be taken into consideration when homework is being set.

MONITORING OF HOMEWORK

A subject teacher's concerns about the quality of a student's homework should be reported by them to the relevant Head of Department and parents may be contacted if an improvement is not observed.

The Day Books of Years 8 to 12 students may be inspected at regular intervals by teachers, Heads of Departments, Year Heads and Senior Management. Teachers are encouraged to write short notes in Day Books for the attention of parents; either to compliment students on the quality of their homework or to alert parents that homework has not been well done.

FAILURE TO HAND IN HOMEWORK

We expect completed homework to be given in on time. This gives pupils valuable experience of working to deadlines and facilitates staff with their marking schedules. If homework is not given in, appropriate action is taken:

- the class teacher will have a discussion with the pupil to find out if there is a good reason for the failure to hand in the work;
- class teacher may record failure to complete work in the Day Book and/or sims
- the class teacher may contact the parents;
- a homework report may be issued;
- pupils may be told to attend detention/homework centre
- or other sanction in line with departmental policy.

This policy was last reviewed by the Leadership Team: November 2013

Appendix 1: HOW CAN I HELP WITH MY DAUGHTER'S LEARNING?

Getting involved with your daughter's education can make a significant difference to her chances of success.

Research has shown that children whose parents are involved get higher marks, have a better attitude towards learning and develop more confidence.

As your daughter gets older, of course, she needs to become more independent. Helping your daughter to get organised, providing equipment and a quiet place to work and offering lots of encouragement will get her off to the right start. Your daughter's Day Book should outline the homework that has been set and when it is due. You should check the Diary regularly and sign it at the end of each week.

How to help – some general advice

- Make sure that you are familiar with your daughter's Day Book.
- Watch out for letters and text messages about Parent-Teacher Meetings and Option/Induction Days, and make every effort to attend
- Nominate somewhere at home as a homework area and have a set time for homework.
- Set up a daily routine. Plan a homework timetable in line with the College's homework guidelines in the Day Book, so that your daughter knows what to do and when.
- It is a good idea if your daughter has a break and something to eat before starting homework.
- Ask your daughter to explain the homework task and how it follows on from what she was studying at school.
- Be interested and be on hand to talk to your daughter about what she has learnt.
- Help your daughter to become an **independent learner**. Explain how to look up information rather than simply giving an answer in order to get the task finished.
- Try to ensure that your daughter can access the College's virtual learning environment from home.
- Turn off the television while homework is being done but do let your daughter listen to music if she finds it helpful and it does not annoy others.
- Read carefully any comments that your daughter's teacher makes about her work.
- Discourage your daughter from copying without editing when she is asked to do research tasks.
- Be positive about your daughter's attempts. If you have concerns about her progress, make an appointment to see your daughter's Tutor.
- The College is keen that parents become fully involved in their children's education. However, please do not be tempted to do their homework, controlled assessment or coursework for them. If your daughter is to progress we need to know how much your daughter understands and can do independently.

Helping with homework

Here are some ways you can help:

- Suggest doing homework as soon as it is received.
- Encourage your daughter to talk to you when in difficulty, as you may be able to help.
- Make sure your daughter has a good work-life balance, and does not spend too much time going out with friends, working in a part-time job or sitting at home doing homework.
- Find out about educational reading materials and programmes on radio and television.

Helping with controlled assessment or coursework

Good controlled assessment or coursework marks can boost your daughter's grades. You can help by:

- Finding out about the curriculum and how much work needs to be done.
- Knowing when controlled assessment or coursework is due and helping to make out a schedule to complete it on time.
- Making sure your daughter is clear about what she is required to do.
- Locating internet sites that can help with her research (e.g. www.bbc.co.uk/schools).
- Advising your daughter to print and save her computer work regularly.
- Encouraging your daughter to talk to her teacher about any problems.
- Making sure your daughter has the right books and resources.

If parents have concerns about homework, controlled assessment or coursework please contact your daughter's Form Teacher.