

# Homework Policy

“If pupils receive appropriate homework and do it on a regular basis over a five year period, they will, in effect be receiving the equivalent to at least one additional year of full-time education. .... a poor homework policy and/or practice makes its contribution to enlarging the achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged pupils.”

## THE ARGUMENTS FOR EXTENDED ACTIVITIES/OR HOMEWORK

‘Extended activities’ are important for a variety of reasons. Such activities:

- Allow a pupil to assess, reflect upon and consolidate work that has taken place in the context of a lesson.
- Encourage independent, unsupported learning and provide the opportunities for and evidence that a pupil can and has learned and achieved independently.
- Provide the possibility of a wide variety of ways of working impossible within the framework of the school curriculum as narrowly defined.
- Enable certain learning activities to go on elsewhere so that those activities possible only in the context of a classroom with teacher present can be exploited to the full in the normal school day.
- Allow for a range of preparation activities which can be exploited within subsequent lessons.
- Provide a vehicle for parent-pupil-teacher interaction.
- Provide a means of bringing into the school the culture of the home and the community.

## IN GENERAL

1. Make sure that the homework corresponds with reality, i.e. that if you set one ‘double’ homework each week, the timetable does not say two ‘singles’. Make sure you do not change the day homework is set without having the pupils change their timetables.
2. The member of senior staff who has drawn up the timetable must be consulted before changes to the homework timetable can be made.
3. Keep a record of what you set (so that parents who claim none has been given can be reassured). Please use the form folders to record homework in Key Stage 3.
4. With classes in which there is a wide spread of ability, try to make sure that the most able can do more than the minimum.
5. Keep a clear record system so there can be no disputes about who was absent when homework was set, given in, returned, etc. Your Head of Department will wish to monitor homework and will need to inspect your records as part of the school self review cycle.

## ORGANIZERS

1. Organizers will be issued to all pupils.
2. Pupils will be required to record the homework set on that day and the dates on which the homework is to be handed in, e.g. “Map of Wales. Mon Oct 16”.
3. The timetable page must be completed neatly to show the subject, the room and the name of the teacher for each period. The homework timetable page should show the subjects in which homework is set each day.
4. At the beginning of the week, pupils must complete the dates in the organizer.
5. At the end of each week, pupils must arrange for their parents or guardians to sign the organizer in the space provided.
6. Pupils should not write or scribble anything on the cover or inside cover except their names and forms and other details asked for. Organizers must be kept neatly and carefully looked after. If an organizer is lost or misused, a pupil will be required to purchase a new one.
7. Form tutors should inspect all organizers during the first form period of each week and make spot checks regularly. Senior Staff regularly monitor the homework system. Organizers are checked and homework records reviewed; also Heads of Department should check at regular intervals that homework is being set, completed and marked.

8. Form tutors and subject teachers should use the space provided to write a message to parents where this is necessary.

## **HOMEWORK MONITORING**

Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring that subject teachers set and mark homework according to the Homework Timetable.

## **THE MORE ABLE AND HOMEWORK**

It is important to ensure that the more able and fast-working pupils are set appropriate homework tasks. They must also be stimulated and motivated by well thought out activities and not left to always “complete a classroom exercise” which they will have already done in the lesson. It is essential that they are stretched by tasks that are appropriate to their abilities and develop their potential. Therefore departments should set work that differentiates by task as well as by outcome: “more of the same” will not meet the needs of able pupils.

### **Some Guidance on Homework**

Most pupils when they enter this school both expect and want to do homework. In the lower ability groups this attitude often changes:

- Because they are not able to work alone.
- Because they give up so easily in the face of difficulty.
- Because the work set is too hard or does not result in any satisfaction.
- Conditions at home may be unsuitable.

Bearing these factors in mind, it becomes extremely important to set homework suitable for, particularly, but not exclusively, middle/support band pupils.

Give clear, precise instructions and define exactly what is required of the pupil and then repeat your instructions.

You will remember that their vocabulary is much smaller than yours and that most children can ‘hear without listening’. Be sure that they have understood the instructions.

Remember also that they cannot sustain interest or work on their own for long periods. Therefore it is wise to begin the homework in class, under guidance, so that they know what is expected of them. Lack of self-confidence produces half-hearted work.

Do not dictate the note for the organizers - **WRITE IT CLEARLY ON THE BOARD**. Many of our pupils can read only with difficulty. They cannot be expected to write their own notes.

Only set homework well within the capacity of the child. The maxim should be ‘practise makes perfect’. Low ability pupils should not be expected to face difficulties without the teacher’s help. Frustration is the enemy of homework.

The importance of a good personal relationship between pupil and teacher cannot be over-stressed. Praise and encouragement, together with a desire to please on the pupils’ part can produce unexpectedly good results.

Please remember also:

- Anything that can be done to stimulate pupils’ reading at home should be encouraged.
- Some of the old panaceas, e.g. learning vocabulary by heart, preparation for spelling tests, etc are still valid teaching methods.
- Whatever the subject, always insist on high standards of neatness, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Where a pupil fails to complete homework, appropriate sanctions should be applied:

- Detention
- Phone calls home
- Inform tutor
- Inform HOD/HOY if problem persists

However, a pupil who does not complete a particular homework may deserve the opportunity to rectify the situation before sanctions are applied.

### **IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- (a) Implementation is assured through the whole school homework timetable and schemes of work and is recorded in lesson planners and pupil organisers, supported by staff INSED on a periodic basis.
- (b) Monitoring takes place in a number of ways including organiser checks, teacher planner checks, lesson visits, year team monitoring and arrangements for Monitoring Work in the Classroom.
- (c) Policy implementation and impact is reviewed by the Deputies Group, the Teaching and Learning Group and the Governors' Curriculum Committee.