

HOMEWORK POLICY

Principles and purpose

To allow students to:

- consolidate learning undertaken at school
- extend learning opportunities
- develop techniques for independent learning
- assume greater ownership of and responsibility for learning
- become more confident learners
- learn how to manage time more effectively

Should all students be set homework?

The principles and purposes as outlined above apply to all learners at The Kingstone School and as such, homework should generally be set for all students. However, the appropriateness of task is the key issue here – teaching staff are advised that it is preferable not to set homework rather than 'set for setting sake' or because this 'might be expected'. Curriculum team leaders will monitor provision of homework by their team members in relation to quality and regularity. Some students with particular needs e.g. SEN, PSC students should not be exempt but their homework will be negotiated and overseen by the SENCO and Inclusion Manager rather than routinely by classroom teachers. This will be clearly communicated to parents. There will be circumstances and occasions when temporary exemptions from homework are necessary and these will be communicated by the relevant HOY through the student planner.

What should homework consist of?

A variety of tasks within (and not between) subjects are to be utilised. These may be of both a short and a long term nature and may include definitions, glossaries, drafting, research, revision, learning, consolidation, reinforcement and planning.

Assessment

All tasks will be marked as prescribed within Curriculum Team policy. There will be an appropriate balance of teacher, peer and self assessment.

Cycle and timeframe

There should not be a strict timetable for the setting and completion of homework. Curriculum teams will work within an overarching framework and communicate this to all students and their parents/carers. Team leaders will be responsible for the monitoring and implementation of this as indicated earlier. Short term tasks will be given a minimum of three school nights for completion.

(Students may be asked to complete outstanding classwork tasks in a shorter timeframe as a result of disengagement within a lesson). Longer term tasks may extend over half a term but will include staging posts for support and monitoring.

Communication

Policies and all procedures will be communicated to students and their parents by a booklet at the start of each academic year. The planner will be the chief tool for two way communication on a day to day basis with parents and school.

Support

In relation to homework, the overriding aim of the school is one of ensuring completion of homework is a positive experience which students have some ownership of. It is considered important that students recognise the value of homework so that they want to engage with the process and in doing so encourage others to do so.

It is recognised that inevitably there will be students who need support with the completion of homework tasks. A range of mechanisms are to be employed in this regard and include individual teacher support, curriculum team drop in sessions, learning mentor study clubs and supervised study within the school library at lunchtimes and after school for which a late bus is provided.

Rewards

There should be a consistent application of school policy on rewards (i.e. merits, commendations and postcards) with regard to completion of good quality homework. In addition, curriculum teams are encouraged to implement their own systems of rewards which might be of various types although teachers should refrain from issuing sugary snacks which is out of kilter with other school policies in relation to a healthy school. Curriculum teams are encouraged to emphasise and celebrate positive outcomes in association with homework which could, for instance, take the shape of notice boards in classrooms or on corridors to highlight issues around homework, provide a point of information and to celebrate achievement. The student planner, once again, should provide opportunity in this regard. The Senior Management Team will take steps to highlight and celebrate effective homework through assemblies.

Sanctions

It is anticipated that upbeat and positive approaches, clear communication lines between home and school, an empathy towards students with needs, consistency of application, mechanisms for support and an emphasis on rewarding and celebrating positive progress will alleviate many difficulties. It is also clear that there will be students who, despite all of the above, will not effectively engage with tasks set for completion outside of the classroom. Staff will not want non-completion of homework to be a barrier to learning or to sour productive working relationships. In all cases, the granting of a second chance is deemed appropriate. When patterns and trends of this nature emerge with students, punitive measures should be within school policy and information and actions communicated within the referral trail.

Policy ratified by Governing Body – 2nd November, 2011