



Policy: Homework

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Homework enhances student learning, improves achievement and develops students' study skills and as such is an integral part of the curriculum. It requires careful planning and integration into the Scheme of Learning and Progress of each curriculum area.

Rationale

At Wellfield, we aim to make Wellfield a place where:

- Learning is paramount;
- Behaviour is outstanding;
- Praise outweighs criticism;
- Students feel happy, keen and fulfilled;
- We are all safe from aggression, racism and bullying;
- We are all helpful and considerate;
- Students want to work hard, take responsibility and play a full part in school life.

Purposes

At Wellfield, we believe that homework reinforces and extends learning for our students. Through setting homework regularly, we encourage independent learning, forge a strong partnership between home and school and help our students to fulfil their potential.

Homework is work that is set to be done outside the timetabled curriculum. It contains an element of independent study in that it is not usually directly supervised by a teacher. It is important in raising student achievement and ensuring students take an active lead in, and show responsibility for, their own learning.

Not all homework is done at home; in fact, for some students who find it hard to work at home, or for some tasks which may require resources (books, software, equipment) more readily available at school, it may be necessary or desirable to carry out the task at school. Through the Homework Club, the school ensures that appropriate resources and staff are available to assist students with homework.

In purposes of this policy are to:

- state the amounts of time students should spend on homework in each year group;
- enhance their study skills e.g. planning, time management and self-discipline;
- encourage students to take ownership and responsibility for learning;
- engage parental co-operation and support;
- create channels for home school dialogue;
- encourage independent study and learning, show progress and understanding;
- extend learning from the classroom, develop research skills, and prepare for new learning;
- extend all students, including the most able and talented, SEND, CLA, minority groups etc.;
- encourage students to develop their skills, confidence and motivation;
- outline the procedures for monitoring the completion of homework;
- state the roles and responsibilities of staff, students and parents in the setting, completion, marking (including providing feedback in the evaluation of teaching and learning) and monitoring of homework.

It must be remembered that

Homework is used to support and extend class work. It is an attempt to help youngsters become independent learners and more importantly form a base of good practice which can be built on in future years. Wellfield School regards homework as an integral part of the learning process.

Guidelines

All subjects build homework tasks into their schemes of work and may include:

- Written work – essays, stories, notes etc;
- Drawing – sketches, plans;
- Problem Solving – calculations, constructions;
- Reading – books, articles, accounts, newspapers etc;
- Learning/Revision;
- Research; project work.

In Years 7 and 8, students are set weekly homework for all subjects **except** Art, PE and RE where homework will take the form of Independent Study (IS) tasks. These are tasks which are designed to last an average of 5 hours. The IS week is the final week before a half term or end of term holiday and will replace the other homework for that week only with the subjects IS being assigned on a rota basis. The work is set the week BEFORE the ultimate week of the half term.

In Years 9, 10 and 11, homework is set by subjects through differentiated homework booklets (half-term tasks) or shorter (e.g. overnight, weekly or fortnightly) homework activities.

Students are expected to spend on average the following amounts of time on their homework:

- **Years 7 and 8:** 1 hour per day;
- **Years 9 - 11:** 1 hour and 30 minutes per day.

A homework timetable is published for each year group by the Deputy Head Teacher with responsibility for Homework once the whole school timetable has been finalised. All **non-IS** subjects appear on the schedule ONCE per week except Maths in years 7-9. This will be scheduled 3 times per week so that shorter tasks, lasting approximately 10-15 minutes, can be completed more regularly as per the principles of Maths Mastery.

In setting homework, subject staff take into account the needs, aptitudes and abilities of the students in their teaching groups. They refer to the specialist information and data available to them e.g. SEN matrices and MATS information. All Independent Study (IS) tasks are checked by the Key Stage Assistant SENCO prior to being set for completion.

Teachers set homework using 'Show my Homework' (SMHW) on the school website and upload any required resources as attachments to the task instructions. Subject teachers keep a record of all homework set according to subject policy. In addition, Subject Leaders and SLT monitor and quality assure homework set through SMHW. Homework is NOT expected to be complete by students who were absent from the lesson during which it was set. Homework is marked in line with the school policy. All staff should make constructive comments including positive specific acknowledgements of what has been done well and set positive and specific targets for improvement.

Students may also record homework in their planners, especially if they do not have access to IT and SMHW out of school. Class teachers and Form Tutors supervise to ensure homework is recorded.

Tutors check student planners weekly to check that students who need to are recording homework tasks. If there are persistent problems with this, the Head of Learning (HoL) is informed who then liaises with the appropriate stakeholders including students, parents, class teachers, subject leaders and the Deputy Head teacher. Tutors must and parents/carers should sign the planner on a weekly basis. Tutors check students' planners every day to ensure that they have them in school. They inform HoL if a student persistently fails to bring their planner to school, and the HoL, in turn, contacts the student's parent / carer to ensure that this problem is corrected.

Students who consistently complete homework on time are recognised and praised in subject areas and through whole school rewards including Vivos.

Any student may complete homework in the Homework Club which is on every night after school. Transport is provided to outlying villages.

The school is mindful of vulnerable students (e.g. CLA, students who have experience bereavement, etc,) who may require additional support, and ensure that this is made available to them as appropriate.

Praise

High quality homework and a good work ethos are praised in class, with Vivos being awarded where student work has risen above expectations.

Where appropriate, homework may be included in display work. For exceptional pieces of homework, a 'Good News' letter, a departmental letter or a postcard may be sent home and/or the student can be nominated for Learner of the Week.

Sanctions

When homework is not completed the class teacher issues a warning and the student is expected to complete the homework and hand it in within 24 hours, or 48 in the case of IS. Please note – it is then the student's responsibility to hand the completed homework in and **not** the class teacher's responsibility to find the student to collect the homework from them. If the homework is still not handed in by this second deadline then the class teacher issues a referral on SIMs for detention. The student will receive a detention whether or not the homework is handed in after this second deadline. Detentions for homework are run centrally every night and by the Progress Leader with responsibility for homework in the case of students who have a period of compulsory detentions. Students who regularly use the second, rather than original, deadline to hand in homework will also receive a detention.

The HoL monitors homework referrals and contact parents if a student fails to hand in 3+ pieces of homework (from across any curriculum area). After that, if homework is still not completed regularly and on time, an escalation of sanctions will be applied leading to use of our higher sanctions which include Internal Exclusion, Fixed Term Exclusion and referral to the Governors' Disciplinary Committee for persistent offenders. (Appendix A - Escalation Schedule). In addition, students who persistently fail to complete homework will be prevented from participating in school trips, except at the discretion of the Head Teacher, until the situation improves.

Responsibilities

The role of the student is to

- listen to homework instructions in class;
- copy down instructions for the task and deadline date into their planner;
- check instructions and resources on SMHW;
- ensure that homework is completed and handed in to meet the deadline;
- attempt all work and give their best;
- inform the class teacher of any difficulties.

Students must hand the homework in to Student Reception by the end of the day. Homework submitted in this way will then be put into the class teachers' pigeon holes in the staff room. If the student is absent from school on the day homework is due in, they must hand in homework on their return.

The role of the Tutor is to

- check at least on a weekly basis that homework is being recorded appropriately;
- check that the planner is being signed by the parent/carer;
- note and respond to any comments written in planners by parents.

The role of the Class Teacher

The class teacher determines the nature of tasks undertaken. The class teacher will:

- set homework/IS and post on SMHW according to the timetable and appropriate to the current scheme of learning and progress;
- provide the stimulus;
- give full and comprehensive instructions;
- set deadlines for completed work and ensure that they are met;
- issue a warning when homework/IS is not handed in and the student will be expected to complete and hand in the homework within 24 hours or 48 hours for IS;

- check pigeon holes the next morning to check if the homework has been submitted;
- will issue a referral on SIMS for any student still failing to hand in the homework if they were not absent;
- mark and return all homework within 10 days;
- provide help and support.

The role of the Subject Leader is to

- ensure the quality of homework set and that it is appropriate to the current Scheme of Learning and Progress using SMHW and/or departmental monitoring procedures;
- work with subject team members to ensure that a system is in place for staff to monitor homework completion by students.
- ensure IS is being set using SMHW with any required resources;
- sample homework as part of quality assurance procedures;
- monitor and evaluate the homework policy within their curriculum area.

The role of the Head of Learning

The HoL has a clear role to play in the escalation of sanctions for non-completion of homework. (Appendix A). They also support students by being available to resolve any emerging issues in liaison with subject staff and parents. The HoL monitors homework referrals and contacts parents if a student fails to hand in 3+ pieces of homework (from across any curriculum area). If homework issues persist, they meet with the parent/carer and work to resolve any barriers to homework being completed in order to avoid the need for higher sanctions.

The role of the SLT Link

The SLT Link ensures departments are setting homework and IS using SMHW. The SLT Link also supports the Deputy Head Teacher when it appears that large numbers of referrals are being referred from a particular subject area. The SLT link will investigate the nature of any issues and work with the Subject Leader and their staff to ensure appropriate action is taken. The SLT Link will monitor the impact of such action and pursue new action to address issues as they arise.

The role of the Deputy Head Teacher

The Deputy Head Teacher monitors to ensure that departments are setting appropriate and relevant homework and IS using SMHW.

The Deputy Head Teacher has a clear role to play in the escalation of sanctions for persistent non-completion of homework after the involvement of the HoL. (Appendix A).

The Deputy Head Teacher may liaise with the Subject Leader and/or SLT Link if there appears to be issues relating to an identified subject e.g. if there appears to be a mismatch between the work set and the students' ability or needs.

The role of the Parents

The role of the parent is crucial if a child is to gain success from homework. Parental support and positive feedback gives students the confidence to persevere, work hard and reach high standards of achievement.

Parents can assist by:

- checking the homework that has been set for their child on SMHW and helping them develop organisational skills to ensure they meet deadlines;
- providing a table, chair and a quiet place to work;
- ensuring homework is done in a student's free time at home;
- checking the time spent on individual tasks;
- ensuring that outside clubs etc. do not hamper a child's quality of work and put a child under undue pressure;
- checking presentation and content of all homework being returned to school;
- signing the homework planner each week;
- providing the school with information about any problems through the student planner or by contacting the school directly.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Homework planners will be checked by:

- The form tutor (weekly).
- The Head of Learning (sampled every few weeks).
- Members of the Senior Leadership Team (sampled as per quality assurance processes).

Quality and completion of homework

- This is monitored in the first instance by Subject Leaders via work scrutiny
- Monitored by SLT and, in particular, the Deputy Head Teacher in accordance with the QA schedule.

Non-completion of homework and referrals for sanctions

- The Progress Leader with responsibility for homework tracks and monitors the numbers of referrals that students receive.
- The Progress Leader liaises with Heads of Learning and the Deputy Head Teacher regarding students who have moved up the escalation ladder and require higher sanctions.

SLT Link

- samples homework records as part of their monitoring processes.
- samples examples of homework and talks to students as part of their monitoring (as per quality assurance processes).

Deputy Head Teacher

- samples homework records through SLT Link reviews.
- scrutinises examples of work and talks to students as part of their monitoring processes.
- evaluates and reviews school policy annually.

Evaluation

By SLT, co-ordinated by the Deputy Head Teacher.

Appendix A - Homework Escalation Schedule

1. Detentions for all homework referrals all the way through this procedure.
2. After 3 referrals – HoL letter. Encouraged to attend Homework Club.
3. After 3 more referrals – HoL Meeting & compulsory attendance at Homework Detention 2 nights per week for 1 half term. Nights determined by HoL based on any specific subject homework being missed. Review after half term. Yellow card for Football Academy students.
4. After 3 more referrals – Deputy Head letter. Students are warned that they may not be able to participate in external activities and trips except at the discretion of the Head Teacher.
5. After 3 more referrals – Deputy Head meeting. Compulsory Homework Detention for 3 nights for 1 half term. Reviewed after that period. Red card for football Academy students. Students cannot participate in external activities and trips except at the discretion of the Head Teacher.
6. After 3 more referrals – 2 days Internal Exclusion. Compulsory Homework Detention for 5 nights for 1 half term. Reviewed after that period.
7. If problem persists – Meeting with Head Teacher and 3 days Internal Exclusion.
8. If problem persists – Increased Internal Exclusion or FTE at the discretion of Head Teacher.

In addition, detentions will also be issued for the following:

- students who regularly submit homework by the SECOND rather than ORIGINAL deadline, regardless of whether or not the homework has been completed;
- students who submit homework that is either incomplete or is of an unsatisfactory quality, reflecting lack of effort and pride in their work.

Independent Study (IS) Referral Procedure

The following will apply for students in y7 and 8 who do not submit IS on time or who submit a piece of work which is significantly below required standard and has NOT had 5 hours given to it.:

- 24 hour warning becomes 48 week warning - to reflect the additional hours to homework needed for quality IS work.
- If not submitted by the 48 hour deadline, referral entered on SIMs and 5 hours of detentions scheduled: Year Managers need to schedule and track this. There will be no further 48 hour warning after this.
- If then submitted before the 5 hours detentions are complete, and only if the piece of work is to the standard required, the remaining detentions are cancelled.
- If work is substandard, the detentions continue until the 5 hours are done and work is submitted to an appropriate standard.

In terms of numbers of referrals accrued for escalation purposes, it will still count as 1.

Appendix B - Advice to Parents

Frequently Asked Questions or Concerns about homework

We often get queries from parents and carers concerning homework. We have summarised these below in what we hope will be a helpful guide which will enable you to further support your child.

1. 'What is my role in homework?'

Encouragement is a major role. Ensure that your child manages and copes with the workload. Sit with them. Talk to them about the tasks. If youngsters verbalise their learning they are more likely to retain the knowledge.

2. 'I'm busy and don't have time to help. What can I do?'

It's not essential that you sit with them and work alongside them, but showing an interest is imperative. Ask them what tasks they're undertaking tonight and sound enthusiastic!

3. 'I can't help because education has changed since I was at school. I don't know what my child is taught.'

You can support by appearing interested in school: reading the school newsletter; attend parents' evenings. Generally show an interest in school. Check the school website.

4. 'I don't know enough about a specific topic to help my child. How can I help?'

Youngsters thrive on rewards and encouragement. Maybe look at some information together. Help collect information. Supporting is an excellent way of helping.

5. 'It's noisy and there's no space at home'

The school has a homework club every night of the week with staff available to help.

6. 'How much homework should my child be doing?'

Students will be expected to spend on average the following amounts of time on their homework each day:

- Years 7 and 8: ONE hour
- Years 9-11: ONE hour 30 minutes

7. 'My child doesn't tell me about homework. What can I do?'

Look in the planner. Make sure you have your log in details for SMHW. Ask your son/daughter's form tutor. Ask them open questions about today's learning at school.

8. 'My child's homework is set irregularly and then doesn't get marked.'

The first thing to do would be to talk to your child and make sure of the facts. If there is an issue, tell us via the planner in the first instance, or directly via their Head of Learning.

9. 'All my child seems to do is finish off work done in class'

It is important from time to time to finish off class work. However, homework should take many forms. If you aren't sure, ask or send in a query via the student planner.

10. 'My child spends more time than is necessary on her homework.'

Youngsters work at different speeds. However, if they are spending inordinate amounts of time on tasks make a note in their planner – or simply write 'x has spent 30 minutes on this task'. The teacher will then take charge of the situation.