



Laurelhill Community College



Homework

Policy

February 2024

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Introduction

Homework comprises any activities set to be completed independently by students, without direct supervision by the teacher, outside normal timetabled lessons. This could be:

- reading
- researching
- learning
- making notes
- revising
- drawing and sketching
- computer based tasks
- instrument practice
- GCSE internal assessment
- project work

Good quality homework will be relevant, interesting and varied. It should have a clear purpose, which is explained to students.

Homework can often require the use of specific resources (books, software, equipment) and it may be necessary to complete these tasks in the College Library or ICT suite. Where resources are required for homework, the school will increasingly look to ensure that there is access to such facilities. In addition, the school will endeavor to support any pupil who has difficulty studying at home.

Rationale

At Laurelhill Community College, we see homework as an essential part of our pupils' education, enhancing achievement and helping them develop the skills and attitudes they will need for successful, lifelong learning.

We believe pupils' study habits and overall academic attainment improve significantly when they are set and complete good quality homework throughout their school career, therefore **all pupils** in each year/band will be set regular homework.

The objectives in setting homework are to:

- help develop good study habits, self-motivation and responsibility
- consolidate what has been learned in class/prepare for new topics
- develop independent learning skills e.g. time management, planning, investigation, problem-solving and research
- provide challenge and extension for all pupils
- allow pupils and teachers to assess their understanding of and progression in their lessons.

Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are:

- to clarify the roles and responsibilities at each level of Teaching and Learning within the College
- to clarify the process of monitoring and self-evaluation of teaching and learning to help maintain a consistently high standard
- to outline classroom strategies which cultivate independence in learning through the development of thinking skills and personal capabilities as outlined in Northern Ireland Curriculum.

Use of Homework Planner

Proper use of the Student Homework Planner should ensure effective completion of all homework tasks. Homework Planners must be issued to all students and used in accordance with the following guidelines:

Key Stage 3 (Years 8, 9 & 10) and Key Stage 4 (Years 11 & 12)

- Students must place the planner on their desk at the start of, and throughout each lesson
- Homework is set by the teacher at the beginning of lessons
- Students must write down each subject they have that each day
- Beside each subject, students must record homework given and the date of completion
- Beside subjects where no homework is given, students should record “revise notes”
- Form Tutors must check to ensure that the planner is being used appropriately
- Planners must be signed by the Form Tutor every week
- Planners should be countersigned by a parent/guardian every week

Key Stage 5 (Post - 16 – Years 13 & 14)

In keeping with our philosophy of developing independent learners, senior students are encouraged to take their own responsibility for the recording and completion of homework. They should be well practiced in the recording and completion of homework if the process described in relation to Key Stage 3 and 4 has been followed.

Roles and Responsibilities

Introduction

Homework, like all aspects of school, is a three-way process involving pupils, teachers and parents. The best outcomes are achieved when each group works in partnership to support pupil learning.

Pupil Responsibilities

1. Listen carefully to homework instructions in class.
2. Copy down instructions and the deadline into their planner.
3. Ensure homework is completed to the best of their ability and on time.
4. Inform the teacher of any difficulties as soon as possible.
5. Use the facilities in the College Library, if not available at home.
6. Collect homework from the teacher immediately on return from absence.

Teacher Responsibilities:

1. Set meaningful homework, according to the timetable.
2. Give full, clear and comprehensive instructions.
3. Set clear deadlines for completion and provide access to all necessary resources.
4. Mark homework formatively, giving pupils information on how they can improve their work and give positive feedback.
5. Return marked homework promptly, within one week of submission.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities:

1. Provide a suitable, quiet place to work at home, with interruptions kept to a minimum.
2. Talk to your child about their homework and respond positively when they ask for help. Give them plenty of praise and encouragement.
3. Support good time-management at home – often it is better to get homework completed before other activities take place.
4. Check the quality and presentation of work being completed.
5. Sign the planner each week.
6. Inform the school if there are problems.

Each **Head of Department** will continuously monitor and evaluate the quality, standard and frequency of homework within their department. This will also be shared with the Senior Teacher for Curriculum, Teaching and Learning to quality assure.

Form Tutors will check that homework is being set and recorded, that the diary is being signed by the parent/carers, as well as note/respond to any comments from parents/carers.

Learning Support Co-ordinator (SENCo) will offer advice on appropriate homework for students with special educational needs or specific learning difficulties. They will also prepare Individual Educational Plans which highlight specific needs or requirements regarding homework.

Head of Year will ensure that practice reflects the policy. They will be involved in the induction to each year group in September where they will assist in outlining the standards and expectations of homework. They will also host assemblies throughout the year to highlight key dates and remind pupils of expectations and standards. Heads of Year will assist and support Form Tutors and Heads of Department in dealing with persistent homework offenders.

Senior Leadership Team are responsible for monitoring the school policy and ensuring that it reflects practice within the College. They are responsible for providing clear guidance and advice annually to parents and carers in Induction evenings held in September. The Senior Leadership Team will monitor departments have an appropriate marking, homework and study policy in place which reflects the school policy. They will also offer advice and support to students, parents/carers and teachers as required.

Adult Assistants were appointed to a pupil can be used to record the homework correctly into the planner, as well as to provide any additional support notes/materials to ensure that the pupil can be supported at home by the parent/carer.

Home Study Workload

Introduction

Where possible, homework should not be set for completion the following day, to give pupils the opportunity to complete homeworks to the highest possible standard. Equally, with good organisation and time management, pupils should be able to avoid a build-up of homework to be completed in one night.

Amount of Homework

Time spent on homework will vary depending on subject, class and the individual needs of the pupil. The following is a guideline:

| | |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Year 8 | (Key Stage 3) 45 – 90 minutes per night |
| Year 9 | (Key Stage 3) 45 – 90 minutes per night |
| Year 10 | (Key Stage 3) 1 hour – 1½ hours per night |
| Year 11 | (Key Stage 4) 1½ - 2 hours per night |
| Years 12 | (Key Stage 4) 1½ - 2 hours per night |
| Years 13-14 | (Key Stage 5) According to individual programme and need |

Frequency of Homework

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Years 8-10 | A schedule is designed in collaboration with departments. A copy is provided to pupils for their personal planner (see next page). |
| Years 11-14 | All departments set homework for examined/assessed courses, however the exact frequency and duration of homework is based upon the requirements of the course (see Appendix 2 ...) |

Key Stage 3 Homework Schedule

| Weekly Homework | |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Subject</i> | <i>Nature of Homework</i> |
| English | One spelling homework per week (learning and written) |
| Mathematics | One numeracy or learning homework per week One topic related homework per week. |
| Modern Languages | One learning homework per week (e.g. vocabulary) |
| Science | One written homework per week |
| Geography | One written homework or learning key words per week |

| Fortnightly Homework | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Subject</i> | <i>Nature of Homework</i> |
| Art | One per fortnight – terms 1 & 2 (research and drawing) |
| English | One reading or written piece of work per fortnight |
| History | One written homework / learning per fortnight |
| Science | One learning homework per fortnight |
| Home Economics | One written task or research per fortnight |

| Other Homework | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Subject</i> | <i>Nature of Homework</i> |
| Art | Project based work – term 3 |
| Drama | One per month (one lengthy written piece and one practical piece) |
| Geography | One extended written piece per half-term based on class topics |
| Modern Languages | One reading and writing task per topic |
| Music | One research piece of work per term |

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Religious Education | One written task or research per month |
| Technology & Design | Up to three pieces of work per half term (design; research and investigation) |

Key Stage 4 Homework Schedule

| Weekly Homework | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Subject</i> | <i>Nature of Homework</i> |
| Mathematics | One numeracy or learning homework per week One topic related homework per week. |
| Business Studies | Written homework within work booklet Revision for examinations |
| Business Communication Studies | Written homework within work booklet Revision and preparation for practical examination |
| History | One written homework or revision per week |
| Music | Practice instrument at least 4 times per week |
| Geography | One written homework per fortnight (weekly rotation) One revision homework per fortnight (weekly rotation) |
| GCSE PE | One written or revision homework per week |

| Fortnightly Homework | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Subject</i> | <i>Nature of Homework</i> |
| English | One reading or written piece of work, with research tasks or preparation for Speaking and Listening tasks per fortnight |
| Drama | Written work including pupil logbook, practice exam questions, writing scripts or learning lines |
| Health & Social Care | Written exam questions for Year 11 Research for Year 12 |
| Science | One written homework, completion of exam questions or revision |
| Religion | One written/research/learning homework per fortnight |

| Other Homework | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Subject</i> | <i>Nature of Homework</i> |
| Art | Project based research and preparation tasks for classwork; research, taking photographs |
| Drama | One per month (one lengthy written piece and one practical piece) |
| Geography | One extended written piece per half-term based on class topics |
| Home Economics | Practice assessment dishes at home and research presentation (no official written homework due to nature of course) |
| Science | Revision for end of topic tests |
| Technology & Design | Up to three pieces of work per half term (design; research and investigation) |
| BTEC Sport | One written or research preparation task as required |

Maintaining Standards

Monitoring of homework

As an indicator of the value we place on homework, regular checks are made at a number of levels to ensure good quality homework is both set and completed:

- Class teachers will keep a record of all homework set. The Head of Department will monitor these records, as well as regularly looking at samples of pupil homework. They will then review and discuss outcomes with the SLT Link Teacher.
- Form Tutors will monitor homework planners, ensuring diaries are signed weekly. They report to Pastoral Leaders at Form Tutor meetings, who also will sample homework regularly.
- The Vice Principal will check homework planners in October/January/May.
- SLT Link Teacher will check homework planners December/March/June.

Submission of Homework

Learning will be affected if homework is not completed or done to a poor standard. Consequently, pupils are expected to complete homework as soon as possible after it is set and by the deadline stated by the teacher. *If a pupil is absent, it is their responsibility to find out about homework which may have been missed.*

When a student first misses a homework deadline, the teacher should:

- Discuss issue with the pupil, offering support if necessary
- Record on lesson monitor
- Inform parents/carers via planner or text message
- Inform the Head of Department
- Request reason from parents/carer.

Extra time may be given if the pupil has a valid reason for non-completion.

If the problem of non-completion of homework persists the Head of Department will be informed and may contact the parents via phone-call or letter. Detentions may also be issued as a deterrent.

Marking and Feedback

Where it is a marked homework, students should receive prompt written marking/feedback from the teacher within one week of submission. Comments highlighting positive aspects of the homework and specific areas for improvement should be used. Work will usually be marked out of a total of 20 (see right).

Occasionally, some departments may also mark work according to the various examining bodies' marks schemes. Where appropriate, verbal feedback will be given, either individually or as a class discussion on what has been achieved and how it could be improved.

| Marks | Grade | Meaning |
|-------|-------|----------------|
| 20 | A* | Excellent |
| 18-19 | A | Very Good |
| 15-17 | B | Good |
| 10-14 | C | Satisfactory |
| 6-9 | D | Below Average |
| 1-5 | E | Unsatisfactory |