Chelmsford County High School for Girls

Homework Policy

Approved by the Governing Body: ~~February 2020~~

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL for GIRLS

HOMEWORK POLICY

The importance of homework to support learning

Introduction

Research has shown that the setting of homework for Secondary School students is a benefit to their learning[1]. However, there is a wide variation in potential impact, suggesting that how homework is set is likely to be very important. There is some evidence that homework is most effective when used as a short and focused intervention (e.g. in the form of a project or specific target connected with a particular element of learning) with some studies showing very strong positive impact on attainment. Benefits are likely to be more modest, if homework is more routinely set (e.g. learning vocabulary or completing problem sheets every day).

Evidence also suggests that relating homework to learning in normal school time is important. In the most effective examples homework was an integral part of learning, rather than an add-on. To maximise impact, it is also important that students are provided with high quality feedback on their work.

Studies imply that there is an optimum amount of homework of between 1 and 2 hours per school day (slightly longer for older pupils), with effects diminishing as the time that students spend on homework increases.

Why should students receive homework?

- Research evidence shows that students make better progress by completing homework;
- Students develop the correct habits for study, including the Learner Profile characteristics;
- Teachers are able to set a wider range of tasks through setting homework and, therefore, have a greater range of evidence of the students' progress and achievement;
- Teachers are able to devote more lesson time to collaborative study, practical work and discussion, if independent work can be completed outside the classroom;
- Students are able to prepare for future learning in the classroom;
- Students can be encouraged to enrich their classroom learning;
- Students and parents can share the learning experience in greater partnership.

[1] For example EEF toolkit states that research evidence shows moderate impact on learning https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/toolkit-a-z/homework-secondary/

Types of homework tasks

The list below is not an exhaustive list of tasks that could be set for homework, but rather an indication of the type of tasks that are appropriate. There is an expectation that students would receive a variety of tasks over time.

- Preparation for future learning (such as reading ahead and summarising or planning tasks for future tasks)
- Wider reading tasks for enrichment or consolidation
- Structured short-answer questions to consolidate learning in lessons
- Choice of tasks with varying levels of challenge
- Vocabulary or key-facts learning
- Extended project work – either completed as individuals or collaboratively
- Guided research with appropriate support at the start of the work, such as key websites or printed references
- Timed essays or extended pieces of writing
- Creative responses to the learning – such as pamphlets
- Online homework tasks
- Revision
- Write-up of experiments or practical work
- Rehearsal

Current research suggests that the most effective homework tends to be preparation for future learning and completion of specific tasks with clear criteria for success. Research also suggests that it is effective to give students some autonomy with the task, such as giving them choices or license to be creative. Project work tends to be least effective.

Under normal circumstances, it is not appropriate to set homework overnight. There are occasions when lessons are on consecutive days and, therefore, the teacher may feel that they have to set homework overnight. In these circumstances, the teacher must make it clear that if a student cannot find the time to complete the work overnight, then their parent can write a note in their logbook and an extension will be agreed. In any case, it should be noted that completing work overnight, such as learning vocabulary does not encourage good learning habits or support students' long-term knowledge acquisition.

Many students at our school are involved in many extra-curricular activities and indeed this is encouraged. This means that students can struggle to find time to do both their activities and spend sufficient time on their homework which leads to extra stress, especially on the highly committed students. It is important that both parents and teachers encourage the students to seek support if they are finding it difficult to balance everything.

It is important to note that there is no expectation that homework will be set every lesson; if there is nothing appropriate to set at that time, then the teacher is not required to set work. However, a creative teacher should be using the full range of homework tasks and, therefore, it would be rare for them to not set homework for a number of lessons.

Homework setting practice

Regularity

The tables below set out a guide for the homework time per fortnight in each year group. This is a guide for subject staff, although it is clearly difficult to judge how long it will take every member of the class to complete the work; teachers should inform their students how long they believe the task should take and encourage their students to give feedback to them at the end of the task. This is also a guide to students and parents; if the task is taking significantly longer than the allotted time then they should give feedback to the teacher. Parents should write a note in the student's logbook if they have decided that the task is taking too long and cannot be completed by the deadline.

If the teacher knows that a task will take longer than their allocated time, then they should make this clear to the students and inform them that the homework will count for the appropriate number of weeks. The students should write this in the appropriate dates in their logbook as evidence and as a reminder.

Year 7

Subjects	Teaching time per fortnight (hours)	Homework time per fortnight (minutes)
Maths, English & Science	6	90
French & German	5	60
History & Geography	3	45
Art, Computing, Drama, Music, Religious Studies and Philosophy	2	30

Physical Education may set occasional homework pieces.

This equates to 660 minutes or 11 hours of homework per fortnight, which is approximately 45 minutes per day.

Year 8

Subjects	Teaching time per fortnight (hours)	Homework time per fortnight (minutes)
Maths & English	6	90
Latin	4	60
French, German, History & Geography	3	45
Art, Biology, Chemistry, Computing, Drama, Music, Religious Studies and Physics	2	30

Physical Education may set occasional homework pieces.

This equates to 690 minutes or 11½ hours of homework per fortnight, which is approximately 50 minutes per day.

Year 9

Subjects	Teaching time per fortnight (hours)	Homework time per fortnight (minutes)
Maths	6	90
English	5	90
French & German	4	60
Latin, History & Geography	3	60
Art, Biology, Chemistry, Computing, Drama, Music, Religious Studies, and Physics	2	40

Physical Education may set occasional homework pieces.

This equates to 840 minutes or 14 hours of homework per fortnight, which is approximately 60 minutes per day.

Year 10

Subjects	Teaching time per fortnight (hours)	Homework time per fortnight (minutes)
English	6	90
Maths, Biology, Chemistry & Physics	5	90
Option Subjects (5)	4	90

This equates to 900 minutes or 15 hours of homework per fortnight, which is approximately 65 minutes per day. Please note that does not include preparation time leading up to the Year 10 examinations in March.

Year 11

Subjects	Teaching time per fortnight (hours)	Homework time per fortnight (minutes)
English & Maths	5	90
Biology, Chemistry & Physics	4	90
Option Subjects (5)	5	90

This equates to 900 minutes or 15 hours of homework per fortnight, which is approximately 65 minutes per day. Please note that does not include preparation time leading up to the mock examinations in November or the final GCSE examinations in May/June.

Years 12 and 13

The amount of homework set for students in the Sixth Form will vary depending on the number of subjects they are studying. The following timings are given as guidance to both students and teachers. It is recommended that students should complete between 4-6 hours of independent study per fortnight, per subject. This independent study should consist of homework which is set in class, and work that extends and enriches their A Level classroom learning. Students should use a mixture of study periods and home-learning time to complete appropriate consolidation and curriculum extension tasks. Teachers are encouraged to consider, in line with key areas of this policy, the amount of time students are given to complete work, to ensure they are able to effectively manage their workload. Workload is closely monitored and is reviewed on a weekly basis. Students are encouraged to reflect on their working patterns with form tutors, through regular planning and monitoring sessions; advice and support is given to students where appropriate.

Students in the Sixth Form may expect to receive a variety of homework tasks, including (but not limited to): preparing appropriate consolidation notes and revision resources; completing practice questions for exam preparation; reading and preparation for forthcoming lessons; and additional work that is set by the teacher that compliments their classroom curriculum. Students may also use the ideas listed to direct their own independent study time.

Deleted: It is obviously difficult to give precise guidance in the 6th form. One of the main reasons for this is that it is good practice for students to complete a wide variety of tasks independently. Therefore, a student may complete the set work that needs to be completed for a deadline, but then spends time on collaborative work, long-term preparation for examinations, their own research and additional reading on areas of the subject that has caught their interest. In addition, in the 6th form, different subjects tend to have a different pattern of tasks; for example, subjects such as Mathematics tend to set small regular homework tasks whereas subjects such as English tend to set large tasks more infrequently….¶
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