

STOWUPLAND HIGH SCHOOL



Homework Policy

History:

Adoption/Review	Committee	Lead Personnel	Review Date
Summer 08	School Effectiveness	AST	Summer 10
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Stowupland High School Homework Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. At Stowupland we firmly believe that homework is a valuable part of the education of every student. It can make a significant contribution to raising attainment across all year groups.
- 1.2 As an integral part of the curriculum, it should be planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of study.
- 1.3 A successful homework policy depends on staff, students and parents working together.

This document should be read alongside the Learning and Teaching and Assessment and Marking Policies and subject specific information contained in Learning School and Subject Handbooks.

2. Rationale for Homework

- 2.1 Homework can help raise attainment by:
 - Providing the opportunity for students to demonstrate, consolidate and extend their understanding of work in school
 - Making more effective use of lesson times by focusing on those activities
 - which require direct teaching, with complementary tasks, not dependant on the teacher's presence, being set for homework
 - Providing time for more thorough coverage of the curriculum through the
 - integrated planning of classwork and homework e.g. it can prepare the ground for future lessons and help develop a fuller understanding of the subject
 - Improving students' attitudes to learning and helping them develop perseverance and self-discipline
 - Encouraging students to work independently and thus identify (for staff and students) areas of strength and weaknesses

- Giving students an opportunity to use books and other resources, including ICT, and to involve adults other than teachers in their work

3. Operational Procedures

Key Stage 3

- 3.1 In Years 7-9, a Personalised Learning System operates where most subjects set an extended project which aims to develop knowledge, understanding and skills within the subject. Each task should take approximately 4 hours and should incorporate good practice in terms of assessment for learning. The only exceptions to this are Maths, Science and Modern Foreign Languages where homework is set weekly (30 minutes per slot).
- 3.2 A Key Stage 3 homework timetable is published at the start of the academic year for staff, students and parents. In addition a copy of the timetable is placed on i-Learn and students have a copy for their planners. Copies of all tasks are placed on i-Learn so that parents and students can access resources from home if required. Reminders are also placed in the weekly staff and student bulletin.
- 3.3 Parents are introduced to the Year 7-9 Personalised Learning System as part of the school's intake procedures where expectations are shared. These expectations are explored with students as part of the Core Studies Programme.
- 3.4 Designated times are allocated for the collection of the Personalised Learning Projects. Each subject teacher must keep accurate records of any student who hands work in late. This information is passed to the Progress Support Worker and included in the Progress Checks.

Key Stage 4

- 3.5 Homework slots are allocated for all subject areas (with the exception of Core Studies and PE) for each year group. For most subjects these are weekly slots, but there are exceptions:
- Science has 2 slots per week and
 - RS (short course) tasks are set once every two weeks.
- 3.6. The duration of homework is 45 minutes per slot at KS4 and there is, therefore, a basic weekly expectation of 6 hours.

Considerably more than this will be expected during the revision periods prior to mock, internal and public examinations.

- 3.7 A homework timetable for Years 10 and 11 is published at the start of the academic year so that parents are aware of the school's expectations. Students will also have a copy for their planners and a copy is placed on i-Learn.
- 3.8 A copy of the homework timetables will be issued to all staff and it is staff responsibility to ensure that homework is set on the designated night.

Key Stage 5

- 3.9 At Key Stage 5 it is expected that students will be set tasks for completion in private study and at home. Independent work is clearly an important part of preparation for employment and higher or further education. There is no set timetable but it is anticipated that students will be set a minimum of one hour per week for each member of staff teaching them. Where two rather than three members of staff are covering AS, students may be set more. There is likely to be an increase in homework leading up to mock and public examinations.

General (All Year Groups)

- 3.10 Homework should always be recorded by the students in their homework planner. There should always be a date for when the work is to be completed. It is important that staff allocate sufficient time in the lesson for tasks to be recorded and that they write down the task clearly on the board. Reasonable time should be allowed for the completion of tasks by students. **Please see Section 4 for examples of good practice.**
- 3.11 Students may need access to school resources, including i-Learn, in order to complete the tasks they have been set. There are various support systems within school ranging from access to the computer rooms, to use of the library and Learning Curve and Year Group facilities.
- 3.12 Students who do not complete homework punctually should be given the opportunity to do so before punitive action is taken. There may be a legitimate reason for non-completion. Attention should be drawn to the fact that homework has not been completed by using a note in the planner. This will be seen by the form tutor and parent.
- 3.13 Non-completion after a reminder would necessitate a 10 minute detention with the subject teacher. If homework is still not handed in after this a subject detention should be set with a letter sent home and a copy given to the Progress Leader. In particular circumstances, a student can be placed in after-school detention (Tuesday night)
- 3.14 If the non-completion of homework persists the matter should be discussed with the Subject Leader and Progress Leader. If necessary, parents should be invited in to discuss the problem.

- 3.15 The roles and responsibilities of staff at different levels are included in Section 5 Monitoring and Evaluation.

4 Good Practice

- 4.1 It is important that homework tasks are **varied**. Homework should not regularly be the completion of class notes or activities. If learning homeworks are set it is important to give students some support in the range of methods they can use.

The following represents good practice across a range of subjects:

- Collecting resources
 - Drawing / sketching
 - Research activities
 - Library work
 - Designing posters
 - Making presentations using ICT if applicable
 - Preparation for role play
 - Data collection and data analysis
 - Questionnaires / market research
 - Drafting work
 - DIRT activities
 - Preparation and practice of dialogues
 - Dictionary exercises
 - Learning vocabulary
 - Written tasks
 - Reading tasks and activities
 - Short investigations
 - Skills practice
- 4.2 Schemes of Work will include clear suggestions for a range of homework tasks. At Key Stage 3 where personalised learning tasks are set these should be specifically incorporated into Schemes of Work. It is most helpful if departments share good practice as this can reduce demands on staff time. A discussion of homework tasks to be set and the response to them should be a regular feature of subject meetings.
- 4.3 Homework does not need to be set at the end of the lesson. Allowing time for explanations and questions during the lesson will invariably improve the quality of what is produced. A good settler activity can be to write down homework at the start of the lesson. Students will also produce better work when they understand how it is linked to what they are learning.
- 4.4 Homework tasks should be written into planners and adequate time should be allowed for this. Task should be written on the board with a clear date for it to be handed in. Reinforcement of classroom expectations that planners should be taken out at the start of the lesson will help ease this.

- 4.5 Other strategies to help with the recording of homework include:
- Labels
 - Stick in sheets
 - Use of TA to note down tasks for some students
 - Use of TA to monitor writing down of tasks
 - i-Learn
 - Random checking of planners as students leave
 - Supply of planner sheets available
 - Pre- printed homework task sheets
 - Setting homework at the start of the lesson
 - Using sixth form mentors
 - By the careful use of staff planners to monitor the prompt completion of tasks we can target those students we know to have difficulties
 - Homework projected onto whiteboard as students enter class
 - Ask students to explain task to each other / class
 - Reminders in lessons and in registers
 - A homework display board with visual reminders of tasks and due dates
- 4.6 Students who experience difficulty in completing tasks can be paired with more organised students who can act as peer mentors. Sixth form mentors can also support students having difficulties. Within Core Studies there will be a regular emphasis on study skills. (See the Core Studies programme).
- 4.7 Homework presents the opportunity to praise and reward students through verbal / written comments and through praise post cards and the revised points system. The power of praise should not be underestimated.
- 4.8 Differentiation should apply to homework as well as to standard practice in lesson planning and delivery. Differentiation by outcome is not the only option.

Numerous strategies exist:

- Choice of tasks (differentiation through preferred learning styles)
 - Quantity of work required (e.g. number of words to be written)
 - Directed tasks for specific groups/ students within the class
 - Different levels of support (e.g. writing frames at different levels, sentence starters for some students)
 - A range of resources to be used
 - A choice of presentation methods
 - An additional 'extension' activity for those who are more confident
 - A range of questions which follow a conceptual hierarchy
- 4.9 At Key Stage 4, several days should be allowed for the completion of work. It should be rare that homework has to be done the next day. This is particularly important for

students who need to make use of school resources in order to complete the task set or who need to ask for advice. At Key Stage 3 specific time slots are allocated.

- 4.10 Students will be more motivated to produce work and work of good quality if they receive speedy and positive feedback. This could be verbal or written. Above all, students need to see that their efforts are being taken seriously. Reference should be made to Schemes of Work which will contain ways in which work can be assessed and to the school's Assessment and Marking policy in order to ensure a consistent approach.
- 4.11 There are times when the quantity of marking can be overwhelming. It is also important that account is taken of pressure points across the school year when reviewing schemes of work and planning homework. It is in everyone's best interests that the assessment of homework is manageable. Setting a varied range of tasks can be useful here, as can using a range of assessment methods.

For example:

- Peer assessment
 - Self assessment
 - Sampling of work / books / notes
 - Marking grids / labels
 - Verbal feedback
 - Issuing students with a mark scheme and encouraging them to cross-reference to it. This can limit the need for a developed comment
 - Use of a coding system, where students have a copy of the code
 - Marking with a specific focus
 - Setting tasks which do not require assessment but prepare students for the next lesson
 - Sharing of worked solutions
- 4.11 Regular discussion and pooling of ideas and resources can prove invaluable in supporting a work life balance and in the ongoing improvement to Schemes of Work. TEEP time can also be used to work collaboratively on homework assignments

Section 5 Monitoring and Evaluation

5.1 Students

Each student has a responsibility to:

- Record in his or her planner the details of all homework (including ongoing coursework tasks)
- Complete the task, to the standard expected, by the deadline given
- Ask for help and support as necessary
- Respond positively to feedback given by teachers

N.B. Students will be supported in developing these responsibilities through the Core Programme and assemblies, and through subject specific study skills.

5.2 Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers have a responsibility to:

- Support the school's policy on homework by signing the home-school agreement
- Check their son / daughter's planner weekly and ensure that tasks are being written down and completed
- Sign the planner weekly
- Encourage their son / daughter to complete homework satisfactorily
- Provide, as far as possible, a quiet place at home for students to complete any work set
- Write a note in the planner if work cannot be completed for any reason
- Contact staff about any concerns relating to homework

These responsibilities will be communicated at tutor evenings and on Intake Day. They will also be reflected in the home-school agreement.

5.3 Subject Teachers

Each subject teacher has a responsibility to:

- Set homework on the designated nights (unless their absence is unplanned) and ensure that students record tasks in their planners
- Provide meaningful feedback to students in line with the school's Assessment and Marking Policy, including the use of formative assessment.
- Annotate students' planners when tasks are not completed, and follow the normal referral procedures if problems arise (See 3.12 – 3.14)
- Set a range of tasks and monitor these through their own records
- Liaise with other colleagues to exchange ideas on good practice
- Provide opportunities for students to reflect on units of work and identify work and activities which they have enjoyed most.
- Use the rewards system to praise students who are conscientious in recording and completing homework tasks

5.4 Form tutors

Each form tutor has a responsibility to:

- Monitor students' planners on a weekly basis to check that homework is being recorded and to encourage them to complete any outstanding tasks
- Contact Subject Leaders/Progress Leaders if homework does not appear to be set

- Help students to develop good organisational and study skills
- Use the rewards system to praise students who are conscientious in recording and completing homework tasks

5.5 **Subject Leaders**

Each Subject Leader has a responsibility to:

- Include homework tasks in schemes of work and to follow the good practice identified in Section 4
- Monitor the implementation of the homework policy by subject teachers through work scrutinies, lesson observations and meetings
- Record their monitoring activities on-line and ensure appropriate actions
- Support subject teachers in cases where completion of homework is a persistent problem, contacting parents as necessary and liaising with senior line-managers and Progress Leaders
- Ensure that homework is regularly reviewed and discussed so that good practice can be shared and developed across the department

5.6 **Progress Leaders**

Each Progress Leader has a responsibility to:

- Compile and circulate a homework timetable at the start of the academic year
- Keep an overview of homework set for the year group in line with the Middle Leader quality assurance document taking actions when and where appropriate
- Record their monitoring activities on-line
- Identify and work with students who persistently fail to complete homework satisfactorily across a number of subjects
- Ensure that students and parents/carers are regularly informed of their responsibilities regarding homework
- Coordinate the CCA/coursework and revision schedule for GCSE to ensure that workload and deadlines are spread

5.7 **Senior Leadership Team**

SLT has a responsibility to:

- Maintain an overview of homework via quality assurance returns, lesson observations, line-management meetings and other monitoring activities
- Ensure homework forms an integral part of all subject reviews
- Support the development of support systems within the school for those students who have difficulties with homework