



Oakgrove School

Homework Policy

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ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS TO HOMEWORK POLICY

Written May 2015

Section	Governors' Meeting or Committee	Page and Year of Minute
Whole Document	Outcomes & Curriculum	Page 43, May 2015
Primary phase review	Outcomes & Curriculum	Page 51, February 2016
	Next review: 2017/18	

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Aims

- To provide clarity and consistency for teachers, students and parents/carers about what constitutes effective homework.
- To reinforce the integral nature of homework to lessons and student learning.
- To establish effective monitoring systems, both subject and pastoral based, that help us to evaluate the effectiveness of our policy.

Personnel

- The Deputy Head (Curriculum) is the member of the Leadership Team who consults school-wide and overviews the implementation and effectiveness of this policy.

Development/Purpose

This Homework Policy informs all subject policies and procedures. Each subject area has formulated its own policy using this framework.

Why homework?

Learning at home is an essential part of good educational practice. It reinforces classroom learning; helps students to develop skills and attitudes they need for successful lifelong learning; supports the development of independent learning skills such as those of enquiry and investigation; enables parents/carers to become partners in the relationship between student and school.

The purpose of Homework

- To encourage students to develop the skills, confidence and motivation needed to study effectively on their own. This is vital given the importance for students in the future of life long learning and adaptability.
- To reinforce skills and understanding developed at school.
- To extend school learning, for example through additional reading.
- To sustain the partnership with parents and carers in the management of students' learning and keeping them informed about the work their children are doing.
- To manage particular demands, such as GCSE work.
- To promote independent learning.
- To consolidate knowledge.
- To practise and apply learning by doing.
- To complete externally assessed assignments.
- To promote self-discipline.
- To develop research skills.
- To undertake work not suited to the classroom situation.

What is needed to facilitate effective homework?

- Clear learning objectives in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding
- Activities that are structured and have a clear purpose (evident in learning objectives).
- Consistent practice across the whole school.

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- Adherence to the regularity of setting and amount of time for activities.
- Clarity for students and parents/carers about what is required and how it is required (set out, in exercise book, on paper etc).
- High expectations.
- Appropriate differentiation.
- Clear and supportive feedback for students, which reflects formative assessment strategies.

Appropriate activities for homework

Activities should have a clear learning objective linked to Programmes of Study and Schemes of Work.

Only on rare occasions should home learning be seen as time to finish off work carried out in class.

It is important that tasks are wide-ranging.

Possible examples are:

<i>Investigations</i>	<i>Interviews</i>	<i>Simple experiments</i>	<i>Essay writing</i>
<i>Research</i>	<i>Public library visit</i>	<i>Drafting</i>	<i>Report Writing</i>
<i>Reading</i>	<i>Designing</i>	<i>Revision</i>	<i>Making a model</i>
<i>Drawing</i>	<i>Word processing</i>	<i>Desktop publishing</i>	<i>Projects</i>

Homework in the Primary Phase

Homework in the Primary Phase is a weekly process. Class teachers will set and collect homework once a week on a specified day.

Time allocations:

Years 1 and 2 - 1 hour per week (literacy and numeracy activities).

Year 3 and 4 - 1.5 hours per week (as above with occasional assignments in other subjects).

Year 5 and 6 - 2-3 hours per week (continued emphasis on literacy and numeracy but also ranging widely over the curriculum)

In addition to homework, supporting reading at home is vital for children. Children need to read at home daily and parents can support teachers by recording this in their child's reading record.

The Homework Timetable

A homework timetable is produced each year for each year group (years 7-11) which provides for one slot per subject in years 7-8. It indicates which day this will be set on for each class in order to give an even spread. Homework timetables are issued to staff and students and are published on the school website.

The Role of the Subject Teacher

Subject teachers should ensure that homework is set according to the homework timetable and that students in their teaching groups are asked to enter homework in their diaries. Setting and reviewing homework tasks should be an integral part of the lesson and students must be clear about what is expected.

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What do we see as the role of parents/carers in supporting students?

- Providing a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which their children can do their home learning, or help them attend other places where home learning can be done, such as home learning clubs or study support centres.
- Making it clear to their children that they value home learning, and support the school in explaining how it can help them make progress at school.
- Encouraging their children and praise them when they have completed home learning.
- Expecting deadlines to be met and check that they are.
- Notifying subject teachers of difficulties that their child may have encountered with the home learning.
- Signing their child's planner (years 5-11) and using it to communicate with subject or class teachers.
- In the Primary Phase, parents may need to be more directly involved in supporting their child with homework and reading activities. Teachers will provide specific guidance on how parents can best facilitate the home learning of their children.

Students with Special Education Needs

In setting homework for students with these needs it is important to balance the right of students to share fully in the work of the class, including homework tasks, with their individual learning needs. These needs may include consolidation and reinforcement of specific skills. Liaison with the school SENCO is key to success in this area so that tasks are manageable, and individual skill practice can be incorporated without overloading the student.

Feedback for Students

If homework is to benefit students' learning they must be given prompt and appropriate feedback on what they have done. Parents/Carers have a role in encouraging and praising children for the effort which they have devoted to homework, but students look mainly to teachers for a response on the quality of their work. Effective marking and feedback are fundamental in helping students make progress.

It is important and useful to make clear to students (and parents) how the homework will be used - to guide a presentation; to share with a small group; in speaking and listening activities; to scaffold a formal/assessed piece of writing. This will be obvious if the home learning activity has been given a clear objective that has been communicated to students.

The role of Subject Leaders in monitoring and evaluating homework policy

Subject Leaders play a key role in monitoring the implementation of the home learning policy. This can be done:

- Through scrutiny of teacher planners and mark books
- Scrutiny of student planners
- Scrutiny of student exercise books
- Student interviews

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The role of Learning Co-ordinator in monitoring and evaluating homework policy

The Pastoral Leader (Headteacher in the Primary Phase) plays a key role in monitoring the implementation of the homework policy. This can be done by:

- Spot checking planners against the homework time table.
- Interviewing students about homework concerns.
- Ensuring that tutors check and monitor student planners on a weekly basis.
- Tracking a small cohort of students over a specific period of time to monitor the homework cycle and its effectiveness.
- Communicating concerns to the relevant subject teacher or leader.

The Role of the Form Tutor

Form tutors are responsible for monitoring that student planners show that homework is recorded and signed by parents on a weekly basis.

It is best to work intensively through a small number at a time so that careful scrutiny can take place. If there appears to be an issue with a particular subject this needs to be discussed with the relevant subject teacher or leader.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated by the Deputy Head (Curriculum) with the Governors' Outcomes and Curriculum Committee every three years.

Oakgrove School
February 2016