

# POLICY

## Wirral Grammar School for Boys



<b>Policy</b>	Homework Policy
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<b>Approved by</b>	Headteacher

### Introduction

Research has shown that the setting of homework for Secondary School students is a benefit to their learning. 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
- 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

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### What types of homework tasks can be set?

All homework should have **at least one** of these key features:

**Embed** - consolidate learning that has taken place in the classroom

- Vocabulary or key-facts learning
- Creative responses to the learning – such as mind maps
- Online homework tasks
- Revision
- Rehearsal

**Practice** - refine knowledge and procedures learnt in the classroom based on feedback from the teacher

- Redrafting work that has been reviewed
- Improving work following assessment by the teacher
- Completing a learning review following an assessment

**Extend** - move learning beyond what has been achieved in the classroom

- Wider reading tasks for enrichment or consolidation
- Adding breadth to existing knowledge
- 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
- Creative responses to the learning – such as pamphlets
- Write-up of experiments or practical work

**Apply** - use learning from the classroom to complete a specific task

- Practice exam questions based on lesson content
- Structured short-answer questions to consolidate learning in lessons
- Extended project work – either completed as individuals or collaboratively
- Timed essays or extended pieces of writing (see reference to AI on page 5)
- Creative responses to the learning – such as pamphlets
- Online homework tasks
- Write-up of experiments or practical work

**Prepare** - Look ahead to future learning

- Preparation for future learning (such as reading ahead and summarising or planning tasks for future tasks)
- 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
- Creative responses to the learning – such as pamphlets

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The examples above are 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 with a choice of tasks with varying levels of challenge. It is expected that teachers will inform students of the feature/s that are being addressed when setting the homework.

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 and email that to the form tutor 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.

### **How regularly is homework set?**

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 process**

#### **How much homework is set?**

We have taken the decision not to provide guidance to the quantity of homework students will receive. Again, research suggests that any more than 1-2 hours per evening reduces the impact on learning. The focus for homework is on the quality, not the quantity. 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 an e-mail to the student's form tutor if they have decided that the task is taking too long and cannot be completed by the deadline.

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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 teacher will include this as part of their entry on MCAS.

### Years 12 and 13

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.

### How do you set homework on Bromcom/MCAS?

**ALL** homework for **ALL** year groups will be set on Bromcom/MCAS pages. It only needs to be set on one. There are links to guides on how to do this below.

The guide for teachers to support them in setting homework on the MIS can be found [here](#).

The guide for teachers to support them setting homework on the app can be found [here](#).

The guide for parents that guides them to seeing the homework set can be found [here](#).

The guide for students that explains how to upload the homework to MCAS can be found [here](#).

Each homework should identify, in one place, the key feature that is being accessed e.g. **Embed, Practice, Extend, Apply, Prepare**. This can be incorporated into the homework title e.g. **Apply** – *Hormones exam questions*.

The key feature could also be included in the Description e.g. *You are going to **apply** the skill be learned today be completing the examination question on page 5.*

Teachers must always include –

- A 'Title' (with a **key feature** if not included in the 'Description')
- A 'Description' – including a **key feature** (if not in the title) & approximately how long the homework should take
- Subject – using the dropdown menu
- Submission type – using the dropdown menu
- Group assignment – which class/students are to complete
- Due date

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Teachers can –

- Give a maximum score for the homework (where applicable)
- Share in Learning Resources – for other teachers to access
- Add resources for students to use to complete the task
- Assign to specific students
- Link to Assessment e.g. Current grade for data drops

### **What happens if students do not complete the homework?**

If a student fails to complete a task, or is the outcome is below the standard that is expected, this **must** be recorded on Bromcom via the class 'Behaviour' page. Students will not debate the validity of this and there is no discussion or negotiation on the application of the 'Behaviour, Attendance and Antibullying Policy'. There is a need to create consistency in this for teachers, students and parents.

The behaviour pathway shall be followed, and this is determined in the policy for student behaviour.

### **How will Artificial Intelligence (AI) influence homework and outcomes?**

All education establishments are currently identifying AI as a potential threat to traditional independent work at all levels. It is something that the school will continue to consider. In essence, there can no longer be the expectation that the work that the students produce at home is their own. This will mean that consideration needs to be given to regarding the type of work that teachers can set.

Types of homework to avoid –

- Extended written pieces on a theme – for example, essays
- Longer research tasks and coursework
- Calculations

However, AI does will have a significant influence on education and should be seen as an opportunity to support learning and reduce teacher workload.

This may be by –

- Using AI to create assessment tasks that can be used in lessons
- Using AI to create specific lessons activities/plans for learning