

# New-Bridge Integrated College

## Homework Policy



New-Bridge Integrated College regards homework to be important to all students, of all levels and all abilities, within the College. Homework is an integral part of the curriculum and is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning. All students are expected to engage in homework on a regular, daily basis.

### **Aim**

To promote independent learning and to raise academic standards

### **Purposes of Homework**

- To develop the habit of independent study and encourage the student to take responsibility for his/her own learning.
- To consolidate learning from topics taught in school.
- To allow for practising, extending and consolidating work done in class.
- To provide training for students in planning and organising time.
- To develop a range of skills in identifying and using information resources.
- To establish habits of study, concentration and self-discipline and independent learning.
- To strengthen home-school links.
- To reaffirm the role of parents and guardians as partners in education.
- To provide parents and guardians with insights into what is being taught in the classroom and the progress of their children.
- To challenge and extend gifted and talented children.
- To provide the opportunity for the teacher to assess student progress and for the students to learn from constructive feedback.

### **General Principles - Homework is most beneficial when:**

- it reinforces and extends classwork and consolidates basic skills and knowledge
- it is challenging and purposeful, but not so demanding that it has an adverse effect on the students' motivation
- parents and guardians are involved in the formulation and implementation of the school's homework policy
- students take responsibility for their homework, supported by their parents
- it is well coordinated and teacher expectations are well communicated
- it is set on a regular basis and establishes a routine of home study
- teachers set suitable amounts of homework which are varied and at an appropriate level considering the age, stage of schooling and capabilities of students
- it is marked promptly and accurately
- feedback and follow-up are provided regularly to students
- it develops and extends the core learning skills of inquiry and independent study

## Recommended time to be spent on homework

Year	8	9	10	11	12
Time	1 hour	1.5 hours	1.5 hours	2 hours	2 hours

in total (i.e. for all homeworks) each night

## Types of Homework

The three main types of homework are:

**Practice exercises** – providing students with the opportunities to apply new knowledge, or review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, including:

- consolidation exercise, e.g. mathematics
- practising for mastery, e.g. drama
- revising information about a current topic
- practising words or phrases learnt in a language other than English
- essay writing

**Preparatory homework** – providing opportunities for students to gain background information on a unit of study so that they are better prepared for future lessons, including:

- background reading
- reading, e.g. English text for class discussion
- researching topics for a class unit of work
- collecting items, e.g. geometric shapes

**Extension assignments** – encouraging students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively, including:

- writing, e.g. a book review
- making or designing something, e.g. art work
- investigations, e.g. science
- researching, e.g. history, local news
- information and retrieval skills, e.g. finding material on the Internet
- monitoring, e.g. advertising in particular newspapers
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Wherever possible homework should recognise the place of technology in today's world and the benefits of using technology such as computers, E-mail and the Internet for organising and accessing information. Coordination of homework schedule is essential to accommodate competing demands, in regard to homework, assessment tasks, assignments and examination preparation.

## **Schedules**

A **Homework Timetable** is produced for each Year Group in the school (Years 8-12) which will outline a schedule of subjects for each night of the week. Each subject area will provide a realistic homework task to comply with the schedule and expected allocation and this information is given to pupils and sent home to parents. Parents are also provided with **Parental Guidance on How to help with Homeworks.**

### **Homeworks and Special Needs students**

Students who have learning needs are expected to complete homework to the best of their ability. Individual targets may be set in the IEPs of students.

### **Planners**

Student planners. Students are required to write details of homework for each evening in their Year Books. The Year Book is also a useful communication tool for parents, guardians and teachers. Students should complete homeworks on the night they are set.

### **Monitoring by staff**

Homework should be checked and annotated as soon as completed and marks recorded. A record should be kept of both punctuality and completion. Students need to learn to meet deadlines and need to realise that the punctuality of completion is a skill that is also being measured. It will give students practice in scheduling, a vital skill in independent learning.

Year Co-ordinators carry out termly **homework monitoring survey** and feedback is provided to Vice Principal and Pastoral Co-ordinator. Monitoring focuses on the following:

- the frequency of homeworks
- is it in line with homework timetables distributed
- type of homeworks

There are times when students should be provided with the opportunity to negotiate the amount, type and timeframes of homework.

### **Parents and guardians can help by:**

- taking an active interest in homework
- reading '**guide for parents – how can I help with homework?**'
- ensuring that there is time set aside for homework
- encouraging and supporting students to complete homework
- providing, where possible, a dedicated place and desk for homework and study
- encouraging their children to read and take an interest in current events
- assisting teachers to monitor homework by signing completed work if requested and being aware of the amount of homework set
- communicating with their children's form tutor any concerns about the nature of homework and their children's approach to the homework
- alerting the school to any domestic or extracurricular activities which may need to be taken into consideration when homework is being set or corrected.

### **Teachers will help by:**

- explaining to students the purpose and benefits of homework
- providing quality homework activities related to classwork
- setting a suitable amount of relevant homework which is appropriate to the ability of each student
- setting tasks which are wide-ranging and structured
- ensuring that students are aware of what is expected of them, and how their work will be assessed
- ensuring students enter homeworks in their Year Books
- entering homeworks into the Teacher Planner
- ensuring adequate time is allowed for the recording of homeworks in planners - write homeworks on board
- giving students sufficient time to complete their homework, taking into account, as far as possible, competing home obligations and extracurricular activities and homework set by other teachers
- marking homework promptly and appropriately, maintaining homework records and providing feedback to students and parents or guardians
- alerting parents or guardians of any developing problems concerning their children's homework and suggesting strategies that they can use
- encourage use of After School Homework Club (Tues, Wed, Thurs)
- **reward good homeworks and improved effort**
- follow Whole School Marking Policy Guidelines and departmental marking policy.

### **The Year Co-ordinator will help by:**

- Drawing up the homework timetable, in consultation with staff and disseminating to parents.
- Supporting the Subject teacher and subject teacher in ensuring that homeworks are completed.

### **Heads of School and Senior Leaders**

- Match students up with Senior Mentors for after school homework club
- Monitor the quality of homework on an ongoing basis, with a formal review of a sample of books from each year group at least once a term
- Disseminate good practice regarding homeworks
- Reward good homeworks where possible.
- In consultation with Pastoral Co-ordinators in the review of homework policy and consult with staff and parents.
- Promote use of VLE for homework support

### **Students can help by:**

- being aware of the importance of homework
- recording and ensuring their understanding of the homework tasks
- completing homework within the given time frame and to the highest standard using the agreed rules for presentation
- seeking assistance from teachers and parents or guardians when difficulties arise
- ensuring homework is of a high standard
- organising their time to ensure that sufficient time is given to quality homework within set deadlines

## Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The impact of the policy on students' learning will be evaluated at the end of each term. As part of this evaluation, the views of students and parents will be sought.

## Marking

This is an integral part of our assessment programme. Apart from the observation of children during lessons it is our most frequent medium for gauging the level of a pupil's skills, knowledge, understanding and abilities.

The marking of a pupil's work allows for:-

- a) Assessment of the content in terms of accuracy (including grammar, spelling and punctuation)
- b) Recognition of effort in terms of thoroughness and presentation;
- c) Identification of problems and errors.
- d) The opportunity for diagnostic comment.

Although the notes below tend to refer to written comments, oral feedback is equally valid and should be encouraged..

- a. The marking policy for each department must be known by and **explained to all students**
- b. Work should be marked **regularly and frequently**;
- c. Work should be marked against **clear success criteria**
- d. Comments should be **positive** and understandable to the individual student. They should give some indication of what has been achieved and set targets for the future; **2 stars and a wish** which is widely in use by a number of departments in the school and is a recommended AFL strategy for 'marking for Improvement' and **providing effective feedback**.
- e. In our assessment of a student's work, we should be concerned with the level of attainment, and the degree to which the student is fulfilling his/her potential. However, the two must not be confused when awarding marks to a piece of work;  
( mark/grade could be awarded for quality of work, set against criteria (attainment) and a mark/number could also be awarded to *indicate effort e.g. 2A or A2*)
- f. Whatever system of marking is used (numbers, grades, etc), it must be **explained to students** and must be **consistent** across the department;
- g. Pupils should be encouraged to assess their own work whenever possible, against set criteria – **self assessment**
- h. Pupils should be encouraged to assess each other's work, against set criteria – **peer assessment**
- i. improving **literacy, numeracy and ICT** skills should be a feature of our marking wherever possible.
- j. We should have high expectations of students in terms of **presentation**. As a bare minimum, all written work should have a **title and a date**. There should be no graffiti anywhere in exercise books or in students' work.
- k. Developing **thinking skills/personal capabilities** should also be a feature of our marking wherever possible;

## **\*\*Exercise books should show evidence of a student's progress\*\***

For marking to be of value work must be assessed against specific skills and learning objectives. Pupils must be informed, when a piece of work is set, as to what is required of them in terms of content, length, structure/format, specific skills etc. In relation to marking, a diagnostic comment must, wherever possible, be given; (A comment such as 'Good' is insufficient. Such an assessment would need to be qualified e.g. "This is good because you have written full answers and explained your ideas carefully". Similarly, for pieces of work that are unsatisfactory some explanation of what is unacceptable should be given and ideas as to how the work could have been improved. **Prompts, Scaffolding and Example Marking** should be employed to ensure student is able to address corrections and improve quality of work. As part of our whole School Literacy strategy, the following guidelines should be applied by teachers, as part of quality marking in **raising standards of literacy**:

1. A mis-spelt word should be acknowledged by underlining it and writing 'Sp' in the margin. (Colleagues should use their discretion as to whether they write the correct spelling or ask the pupil to look up the word in a text or in the dictionary).
2. In accordance with SEN policy, subjects are required to only correct a certain number of important spelling mistakes, especially with dyslexic pupils – 5 spelling mistakes have been agreed with SENCO
3. A wavy line under a phrase or sentence, with a "Gr" in the margin will indicate incorrect use of grammar.
4. Circles in the pupil's writing, with the letter "p" in the margin, indicates that punctuation is missing or incorrectly used.
5. Two // lines in the text indicate the need to start a new paragraph.
6. One / line in the text indicate the need to start a new sentence.
7. ^ indicates that something has been omitted.
8. CAP in margin indicates the need for Capital letter.

### **Presentation of work**

All pupils, in every subject, must present their work in the same way.

- ❖ The date to be written on the top line on the right hand side of the page.
- ❖ 'CWK' or 'HWK' to be written as part of the title. Where work is to be completed at home 'HWK' should be put in the margin where the homework was begun.
- ❖ The title to be underlined using a ruler.
- ❖ Diagrams to be drawn in pencil.
- ❖ Poor quality handwriting is unacceptable. Similarly, graffiti on the cover of an exercise book or within the book is unacceptable.
- ❖ Use coloured pencils instead of felt tip pens.
- ❖ No tippex (or correction fluid).

### **Quality Control**

This lies with the Subject Leaders who, at regular intervals, should check the frequency that books are being marked and whether the standard of marking adheres both to the school and departmental policy. This can be achieved through termly 'book scoop'. Good practice should be shared internally. Vice Principal and Curriculum Leader team to carry out book scoop across departments on annual basis.