



Circular No 2023/
Lisnagarvey High School
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Homework Policy

JP Sheerin
Secretary to Board of Governors

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Rationale:

Research findings from the Education Endowment Foundation into excellence in schools, has concluded that homework is an essential part of a good education, and helps to consolidate and scaffold the learning of students. This research demonstrated that, where homework is completed consistently, the most positive impacts are seen at secondary school level.

The impact of homework has been extensively studied. It is difficult in any area of education to be certain of cause and effect. However, it is undoubtedly true that schools in which students are completing homework well tend to be successful schools.

It is our firm view that pupils' study habits and overall academic attainment will improve significantly as a result of the setting and completion of good quality homework throughout their school career.

Homework comprises any activities set to be completed independently by students, without direct supervision by the teacher, outside normal timetabled lessons.

Good Quality Provision in Homework:

- helps to develop good study habits, self-motivation and responsibility;
- reinforces what has been learned in class;
- develops independent learning skills of organisation, planning, time management, investigation, problem-solving and research;
- is challenging but attainable for students of all abilities;
- provides challenge and extension for the most able students;
- allows the student and teacher to assess how well the student has understood the content of lessons;
- can provide a basis for the following lesson e.g. through a peer assessment task;
- develops numeracy and literacy skills.

How much homework should students be completing?

The amount of time it takes different students to complete the same tasks will always vary, so it is not possible to be exact about the time which should be being spent on homework. However, the following guidelines provide some idea of a benchmark:

Year Group	Per Subject	Average Time Per Week
8	English and Maths	2 hours total
	Other subjects	2 hours total

9	English and Maths	2-3 hours total
	Other subjects	2-3 hours total
10	English and Maths	2-3 hours total
	Other subjects	2-3 hours total

Resources

Homework can often require the use of ICT. Where laptops or PCs are not available at home, it is the responsibility of the pupil to arrange to stay and complete the work on the computers in the school library or otherwise. Students must check the opening times of the library and plan accordingly. Should a student have difficulty in finding a suitable time, they should approach a staff member to seek guidance; this must be done in timely fashion and well before the relevant deadline. Furthermore, Lisburn Library also offers great ICT resources, so this is another option open to all students.

Responsibilities

Homework, like all aspects of learning, is a three-way process involving, first and foremost, the student; however, it is also incumbent upon teachers and parents to play their part. Each has very specific responsibilities:

Students should:

- listen carefully to homework instructions in class;
- ask questions regarding the homework during the lesson, rather than seeking help via Google Classroom;
- check their Google Classroom 'To Do List' and the individual classrooms, for homework every evening;
- ensure that homework is completed to the best of their ability and on time; failure to do so will result in detention/extra work being set;
- ensure their parent/carer provides a note, on the day the homework is due, if there has been a genuine reason why the homework was not completed on time;
- bring all the correct books to class: forgetting one's book, particularly when it contains homework, will result in detention;
- make sure the entire homework set has been completed/attempted. Partially completed homeworks will be recorded as 'not done' and a detention will be issued;
- ensure any homework missed is completed for the following day.

Subject Teachers should:

- set meaningful and purposeful homework that will enhance learning;
- follow departmental policy and schemes of work in terms of the setting of homework;
- give full, clear and comprehensive instructions, allowing enough time in the lesson to do this and to enable students to seek clarification, should they require it;
- set clear deadlines for completion and ensure that the correct procedure (outlined later in this document) is applied to all pupils failing to meet deadlines;
- provide constructive feedback: this may come in verbal form or otherwise;
- provide opportunity for pupils to seek clarification regarding homework set.

The Head of Department should:

- ensure that Schemes of Work and teaching plans include homework which will consolidate and enhance learning, and develop study skills;
- monitor, evaluate and enhance homework policy and practice within their curriculum area.

The Form Teacher should:

- liaise with parents/carers, and the Head of Year, if there are concerns in multiple subject areas.

Parents should:

- provide a suitable, quiet place to work at home;
- support good time-management at home and ensure homework is completed at an appropriate time of day; often, it is better to get homework completed before other leisure activities take place;
- talk to your child about their homework;
- check your child's Google Classroom and ensure that deadlines are being met; if homework is not handed in without valid reason, the class teacher will issue a sanction, for example: detention/extra work;
- check the presentation and quality of work that is being completed – if homework is not completed to an acceptable standard, the class teacher will issue a sanction, for example: repeating the work/detention/extra work;
- where a child is struggling to complete homework for any valid reason, contact the relevant member of staff (please consult the 'Who to Contact' document)
- where there is a genuine reason why the homework was not completed on time, a note must be sent with your child **on the day it is due**; this helps avoid unwarranted sanctions being imposed.

What happens when homework is not completed, or completed to a poor standard?

Responsibility for non-completion of homework rests solely with the student. This also means that, when a student is absent, it is their responsibility to check their Google Classrooms for homeworks that may have been missed.

The primary consequence of incompleteness of homework is that **learning is negatively impacted**. Consequently, it is the duty of the teacher to follow this up. On some occasions, depending on the nature of the homework set, failure to complete the homework could also result in missed learning opportunities during the subsequent lesson: for example, a peer assessment task may have been planned, based on the completed homework. All subject teachers will follow the same process and the same process will be applied to all students:

1. Each student will be given one 'pass' per term, by each subject. This means that, on the first occasion that homework is not completed fully or on time, it will result in a warning, recording on SIMS and an instruction to do the homework for the following day.
2. Should the homework not be completed for the following day, **either** an after-school departmental detention will be set and parents/carers informed via text **or** the pupil will be given **extra** work (**as well as** the original homework) to complete and submit the following day. Departmental detentions are 25 minutes in duration and occur after school. In some cases, the class teacher may issue an alternative sanction to the two outlined, should they deem it more appropriate.
3. Except in the case of absence, failure to complete extra work given, as well as the original homework on time **or** to attend departmental detention, will result in a Whole-School Detention being set. Whole-School detention is held each after school Wednesday and the duration is 45 minutes. It is overseen by senior staff. Failure to attend Whole-School Detention (except in the case of absence), will result in suspension.
4. Should a student who has used their 'pass' for that subject, fail to complete any further homeworks, on time or in full, this will automatically result in the actions outlined above (in points 2 and 3) being implemented.

Lunchtime and Breaktime Detentions

Staff are legally entitled to their breaks and are therefore not expected to oversee detentions during their lunch and break times. In some cases, the class teacher may set a break or lunch detention; however, that prerogative lies entirely with the teacher. Parents should not pressurise staff to give up their breaks and lunches to supervise pupils in detention. Should a certain day not suit after school, a different day (perhaps one of the earlier-finishing days) may be negotiated or the alternative sanction of extra work may replace the detention. Whole-School Detentions cannot be negotiated, except for the date, if there is an extenuating circumstance; these are set on a Wednesday throughout the academic year and cannot be moved to any other day.

If the problem of non-completion of homework persists, then the parents/carers, Head of Department, Form Teacher and Head of Year will be informed and additional monitoring and/or intervention will be put in place, such as a monitoring card.

Conclusion

Homework is not an end in itself. It creates work for students in completing it, for parents in supervising it and for teachers in setting and marking it and following up non-completion. We believe that it has intrinsic value, in terms of improving pupils' learning and developing in them, essential habits of independence, organisation and motivation.

We as a school value the independent responsibility which homework fosters and realise the success that can be achieved by all stakeholders: pupils, parents and teachers working together to improve the educational outcomes of our learners.

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