

St Mary's Catholic High School, Leyland

Homework Policy



Updated: September 2017

Review: September 2018

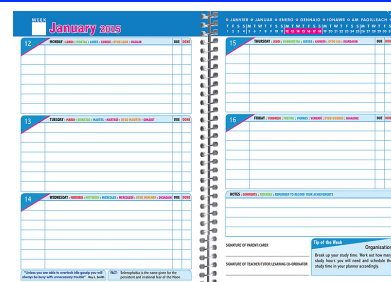


Rationale

The rationale for the homework policy at St Mary's Catholic High School is to enable our pupils to extend and expand their education beyond the confines of the classroom. This helps our pupils develop scholarship and, in particular, their independent learning skills. Homework is any relevant task or activity selected by the teacher, to be completed outside curriculum contact time. While it will usually be done at home, it may also take the form of supported study/homework clubs.

What should be expected?

The tasks assigned to pupils will take a variety of forms and will increase in complexity throughout their secondary education. All pupils will be issued with a 'Planner' at the start of the academic year in which they should record the tasks set and in which you should feel free to make comments. We require parents to check and sign the planner at weekly intervals.



Why is homework important?

Learning at home is an essential part of a good education. Regular homework is important.

- It gives pupils the opportunity to practice for themselves the tasks done in class and contributes towards improving a range of important skills
- It builds confidence and assists young people to personalise their learning. It allows children to work at a pace which suits them and their ability
- It provides the opportunity for pupils to extend their learning and undertake further independent research.

We are constantly evaluating strategies to improve the value of homework and make assessment more useful for pupils.

The role of parents

Parents play a key role in the education of their children. In early stages parent/child dialogue can promote language and numeracy skills and as pupils progress through primary and secondary school parents can provide a supportive environment in which the young person can develop the necessary study skills to move towards independent learning. Our homework policy takes account of parents as partners in learning.

Effective homework

To be effective homework should be:

- Varied and interesting
- Appropriate to the needs and abilities of the pupil
- Well explained with a clear purpose understood by all
- Recognised and rewarded by meaningful & helpful feedback given as soon as possible
- Relevant to the ongoing work of the class or group
- Manageable within a reasonable amount of time

What should you expect?

For pupils in Years 7, 8 & 9, a homework schedule is issued to pupils and printed in the front of the Student Planner as well as on the school website HOMEWORK section. This section of the website will increasingly contain details and many of the resources for each of the tasks set across Years 7, 8 and 9

A schedule for pupils in Years 10 & 11 is issued at the start of the academic year and is also available on the school website. In contrast to homework in Years 7, 8 & 9 the content and extent of work in Year 10 & 11 will vary considerably.

Allocating time for homework

Time is approximately apportioned as follows:

Year 7:	2 to 5 hours
Year 8:	3 to 6 hours
Year 9:	5 to 7 hours
Year 10:	6 to 8 hours
Year 11:	10 to 14 hours

The grid below shows examples of the time allocations within curriculum years and subject. The nature of the home learning task and the amount will vary with the age, ability and needs of the pupil. This is an approximate allocation of time that a child might spend on home learning because some may take longer than others; the following guide for each week should be helpful.

Year 7: 2 to 5 hours		
Subject	Hours Taught	Proposed Minimum Homework
English, Maths, Science	3	30 min
Technology, RE, Geography, History, MFL	1.5 or 2	30 min
Music, Art	1	30 min
Year 8: 3 to 6 hours		
English, Maths, Science	3	45 min
MFL, Technology, RE, Geography, History	2	45 min
Art, Music, Computer Science	0.5 or 1	45 min
Year 9: 5 to 7 hours		
English, Maths, Science, MFL	3	60 min
Technology, RE, Geography, History	2	45 min
Art, Music, Computer Science	1	45 min
Year 10: 6 to 8 hours		
English, Maths, Science	5	60 min
RE, Option A, B & C	2	60 min
Year 11: 10 to 14 hours		
English, Maths, Science	4	90 min
Science (Single)	6	120 min
RE, Option A, B & C	3	60 min

Support strategies

The following support strategies are incorporated into our practice:

- Parent-friendly guides and workshops on policy and practices
- User-friendly guides to effective personal study for pupils
- Tasks to incorporate the full range of effective teaching and learning strategies which will give pupils opportunities to learn effective techniques such as:
 - Mind mapping
 - Memory techniques
 - Summarising - note taking
 - Speed reading
- Support for pupils who have difficulty in working or completing tasks at home by providing alternative time slots and venues as appropriate;
- Mechanisms to inform parents when a pupil consistently fails to complete homework and to enlist their support;
- Homework planners, which act as a record of work set and as a liaison link between parents and the school. The diaries may also be useful in the area of target setting and recording achievement;
- Effective use of existing support mechanisms e.g. primary/secondary data transfer guidance, year monitoring, target setting;
- Effective structures for monitoring homework policy in practice both from the perspective of whole school monitoring and key stage/departmental monitoring.

Support strategies

- Nominate somewhere at home as a homework area. It needs a flat surface, a good light source and resources such as pens, pencils, rulers, scissors, glue, dictionary and notebook to hand.
- Set up a daily routine based on the timetable given. Add reading, which vastly expands learning for children.
- It's a good idea if your child has a break and something to eat before starting on homework.
- Ask your child to explain the homework task and how it follows on from what they were studying at school.
- Be interested and be on hand to talk to your child about what they have learnt so far.
- Help your child to become an independent learner. Explain how to look up information or find a word in a dictionary rather than simply giving an answer in order to get the task finished.
- Don't be tempted to teach your child methods you used at school.
- Turn off the television while homework is underway but do let your child listen to music at a low volume if they find it helpful.
- Discourage your child from copying when they are asked to do research tasks. Talk about the information together, work out the key facts and help your child to write these down as brief notes.
- Be positive about your child's attempts. If you have concerns about their progress, make an appointment with the school.
- Don't let homework become a chore. Make it a special time that you both look forward to.
- We are extremely keen that parents become fully involved in their children's education but please don't be tempted to correct homework and make your child copy it out. We need to know how much your child understands and can do independently

Resources

If you visit our Homework page on the school website, you will find links to lots of resources that can help with homework