

EXTENDED LEARNING POLICY

Rationale

The governing body recognises the value of extended learning as a valuable part of students' educational experience. Research evidence suggests that three of the factors that can have the biggest impact on student performance for the lowest cost are:

- homework;
- students learning how to learn and taking control of their learning;
- effective feedback from teachers on how to improve.

The governing body also recognises that in an era of increasingly personalised learning, a policy needs to combine a coherent whole school framework with the flexibility to meet the individual needs of students. This will include both traditional homework and a variety of other learning opportunities.

Through extended learning it is intended that students will:

- take ownership of their own learning;
- develop the skills of independent learning, with the confidence and motivation needed to study effectively on their own;
- consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding developed at school.

Policy

1. All students are entitled to extended learning opportunities.
2. Some of these opportunities will be optional, with students being given the opportunity to attend enrichment sessions out of school hours, or offered extension tasks which go beyond the basic minimum requirements of the course.
3. Some extended learning will be compulsory – this will be referred to as homework and it will be expected that all students complete this work.
4. The balance between these two types of extended learning may vary between subjects, and between students and groups of students within the same subject.
5. Parents should be informed about the work students are doing with the aim of maintaining their involvement in the management of students' learning.
6. Teachers should, wherever possible, provide differentiated learning opportunities which may involve an element of student choice.
7. Students participation in, and completion of, extended learning opportunities and tasks should be monitored and acknowledged, for example through the award of appropriate effort grades and the rewards and sanctions system.
8. Feedback to students on the work that they have completed or the skills that they have demonstrated is an essential part of the process and should be given promptly. More detailed guidance is set out in the 'Marking and Feedback' section below.

Guidelines

- 1 Extended learning refers to any work or activities that students are able to access outside lesson time.
- 2 Homework refers to any work or activities that students are told to do as a compulsory part of the course.
- 3 Extended learning should be carefully planned as part of a department's scheme of work. It is important that extended learning forms a meaningful and coherent part of the work for a particular subject and is appropriately differentiated to meet the needs of students. Models of extended learning could therefore include:
 - a) homework tasks that are specifically set for all students in the class to complete;
 - b) voluntary tasks or opportunities that students could take up or complete if they had a particular interest in the subject matter, or were targeting a specific grade or outcome;
 - c) a menu of options from which all students have to select one or more tasks, but where the students have some discretion over which activity they do;
 - d) a core (compulsory) homework with optional extension activities;
 - e) a compulsory homework that covers a core theme, but that is set at different levels according to the ability of the students for whom it is set.
- 4 All departments should have practices in respect of the setting, managing and monitoring of extended learning that are consistent with this policy statement.
- 5 Subject leaders are responsible for establishing guidelines within their areas of responsibility. They should state the opportunities and requirements of the subject in their course descriptions published to parents.
- 6 Extended learning may take a variety of forms. These may include:
 - i. extra-curricular activities such as instrumental practice; attendance at concerts, theatre, other trips or after school clubs and workshops;
 - ii. participation in school teams or groups;
 - iii. rehearsal for performances that may be specifically linked to the course being studied, or more generally linked to the subject;
 - iv. exam/book/worksheet based questions;
 - v. learning homework, including revision for tests and exams;
 - vi. research assignments;
 - vii. practical exercises, such as home experiments;
 - viii. reading a broadsheet newspaper; listening to a podcast or other broadcast; reviewing an article;
 - ix. essay writing or other extended writing task;
 - x. developing software skills and programming;
 - xi. reading ahead or consolidating past work;
 - xii. preparation of a shared resource (including a starter/plenary) or production of a leaflet, poster etc;
 - xiii. preparing a presentation.

- 7 Homework should be distinct from classwork, though it may be appropriate to establish a planned link between tasks. For example, students could be asked to use homework to finish off the evaluation of a project started in class.
- 8 Completing unfinished work that was intended as classwork may be a necessary activity, but would **not** be regarded as a homework task or extended learning opportunity.
- 9 Longer term projects require careful planning and monitoring by the subject teacher. There should be interim deadlines for partial completion of particular sections of the work, which can be monitored so that students get appropriate feedback before the final deadline.
- 10 While we should be encouraging the use of new technology where appropriate, it is important for the subject teacher to check on the availability of ICT for each of their students, and arrangements made for them to complete work in school if it is not possible for them to carry out the work at home.

Organisation

- 1 Extended learning opportunities will be provided for all students, who will be encouraged to establish good working habits from the time they enter the school.
- 2 The nature, type and length of homework will vary according to the age and abilities of the student and the subject. In some cases, compulsory homework may not be regarded as essential or desirable.
- 3 Teachers should always allow a reasonable amount of time for homework to be completed. Students may have extra-curricular commitments on certain nights and teachers should, therefore, avoid, requiring homework the following day.
- 4 In some instances, for certain set tasks, work completed out of the lesson will be used or reviewed in the following lesson and this may then be assessed by fellow students.
- 5 Students will be given advice and guidance about time management, study skills and dealing with stress through the tutorial and personal wellbeing programmes, as well as through subject lessons.
- 6 The amount of homework will vary as students pass through the school. The amount of time spent on homework will vary between individual students depending on the course choices selected.
- 7 As a general guide, the amount of homework is likely to increase:
 - as the student passes through the school from year 9 up to year 13;
 - if a student is aiming for higher grades at both KS4 and in the sixth form;
 - if a student selects courses which involve a greater degree of project and portfolio work.A guide to the amount of homework expected will be published in the course booklets to assist students and parents in making appropriate choices at both Key Stage 4 and post-16.
- 8 Homework may take the form of extended pieces of work which may cover several weeks. Students will be expected to take an increasing level of responsibility for planning the completion of such work under the guidance of their teachers.
- 9 Where students are following learning support or study plus options, teachers and/or subject leaders should provide extended learning activities or resources that students can access in these lessons to reinforce and enhance their core learning.
- 10 For students on level 3 (advanced) courses in years 12 and 13 it would be expected that each teacher in each subject would provide regular extended learning opportunities, which would include formal homework.

- 11 The main method of communicating with parents will be via the 'Show my Homework' (SMH) website.
- 12 Pre-printed planners will also be made available in which students can record homework and other extended learning opportunities.
- 13 Subject teachers should ensure that they set work according to departmental guidelines. Tasks should be explained to students in the lesson and will then be logged on the SMH website. Students may also use other methods for recording homework reminders, such as using their planners or recording reminders on mobile phones. If an assignment is to be completed over a long period, interim deadlines should also be recorded.
- 14 Teachers may also wish to use e-mail distribution lists to remind parents and students about when homework has been set, and to give reminders about deadline dates.
- 15 Parents will be encouraged to check the website regularly and to discuss homework with their children and to help them plan its completion on time. This is especially important with extended homework that may cover a series of homework periods.
- 16 Wherever possible, parents will be encouraged to provide a suitable place, away from distractions, for their children to complete homework. Where this is not possible, parents should encourage their children to attend homework clubs or use other provision made by the school.
- 17 The Library is available for the completion of homework at lunchtime and after school. Opening times will be kept under review and we will do our best to meet student and parent requests.

Marking and Feedback

- 1 It is good practice, wherever possible, to share with the students the assessment criteria that will be used for marking the work at the point when the homework is set.
- 2 Students should be given feedback as soon as is practicable after the due date for completion of the homework. It is critical to return all EL tasks within a timely fashion, or the impact on students' learning is greatly reduced.
- 3 Students appreciate high quality feedback and may become disappointed or demotivated if they feel that their efforts are not being recognised. If work is set and it will not be teacher assessed this needs to be made clear in advance to avoid disappointment.
- 4 The nature of the feedback will vary according to the task set, but could include:
 - oral feedback with self-marking or peer marking by students;
 - standard written feedback in the form of a mark scheme or model answer for students to self-assess or peer assess their work;
 - collection of written work and the awarding of an effort grade in line with the school's agreed system;
 - awarding of an attainment grade or a mark for individual pieces of work, or as a summative grade for a section of work which includes one or more pieces of homework.
- 5 Written feedback should give credit and positive feedback for the skills and knowledge demonstrated, and make constructive suggestions about how work could be improved in the future, or set targets for achievement in the next phase of the course.
- 6 Not all pieces of work need to be marked in detail – in some cases it will be sufficient to check that the work has been completed.

Implementation

- 1 **Subject teachers** will monitor the extended learning completed by the students in their teaching groups.
- 2 Where an activity is an optional extended learning opportunity, student participation should, by definition, contribute to the award of a V or O grade for effort for that section of the course, since the effort made has been more than the minimum required. Student participation may also be recognised in other ways, for example through the use of praise postcards, congratulatory e-mails or the award of positive behaviour points on SIMS.
- 3 Completion of compulsory homework should be monitored according to the principles set out in the assessment policy:
 - Grades of 'O', 'V' or 'G' should be awarded for homework that is completed to an appropriate standard and submitted by the required deadline.
 - An 'N' grade would be awarded where work does not reflect the expected effort for an individual student. This grade would normally be awarded for homework that is late, partially completed or only completed after a reminder and deadline extension.
 - A 'W' grade would be awarded where the initial deadline is missed but work is then completed after a low level sanction (e.g. break detention) or the threat of a higher level sanction.
 - A 'U' grade is awarded for work that is not attempted, or of such a poor standard or quantity that it completely fails to meet the criteria set.
- 4 Teachers should use their discretion and professional judgment in applying these descriptors on a 'best fit' basis. For example, work that might otherwise merit an 'O' grade but was submitted slightly late could be awarded a 'V'.
- 5 Where a 'U' grade is awarded, further action and/or a formal sanction will normally follow, for example:
 - parental contact via phone, letter or e-mail or planner;
 - withdrawal of the student from one or more lessons to work under supervision elsewhere in the department until the deficit is made up;
 - lunchtime or after school detention.
- 6 **Heads of Year** are responsible for monitoring the setting of homework across their year groups and for alerting the appropriate Subject Leader and/or Head of Faculty if there are concerns.
- 7 **Subject leaders** are responsible for the nature and quality of extended learning tasks and opportunities set by their department, through the appropriate Head of Faculty, to the Senior Leadership Team.
- 8 **Subject leaders and heads of faculty** are also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of policies within their department, including the marking or work through regular work scrutiny.
- 9 The SMHW system does provide a number of tools which allow the quantity of work set to be monitored very easily. While these tools may be a very useful part of the monitoring procedure, it is no part of this policy to have any kind of crude 'league tables' in which the quantity of tasks set is seen as an end in itself. Quality of provision and the positive impact on learning and student motivation are the key factors that will constitute success criteria.
- 10 **Students** are responsible for checking that they know what work has been set, through a suitable combination of looking on the website, checking e-mails and looking at their own notes in their planners or on electronic devices.
- 11 Students also need to take responsibility for making sure that work is completed on time. If there are problems about meeting a deadline, students should discuss this with subject teachers. Where there are concerns about the overall amount or nature of homework being set this could be discussed with subject teachers, form tutors or parents as appropriate.

- 12 **Parents** are responsible for checking the SMHW website and/or student planners and ensuring that homework is completed by students. Parents will be encouraged to provide an e-mail address so that teachers can get in contact with information or reminders where appropriate. Concerns about homework would normally be raised with form tutors in the first instance.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy will be reviewed every three years by members of the Senior Consultative Group. Views of students will be sought through the School Council.

Date approved by governors	June 2014
Date for review	June 2017