

Homework Policy – Senior School

Senior School:

Homework is set so that individuals can develop the essential self-study skills necessary to achieve and fulfil potential. Homework gives individuals an opportunity to work independently and take responsibility their own learning. “Homework” or “Prep” are the generic terms we use for work done outside timetabled lesson time.

- At Austin Friars homework is set to complement and enhance learning
- Homework may consolidate or extend prior learning, or may involve preparation for future learning
- Homework also contributes towards pupils developing the skills to become confident and independent in their learning; skills which will be of help throughout their time at school, and in adult life.
- Homework will often be done at home, but pupils may use “free time” and Prep. time to work on homework tasks in school

We set homework because:

- It encourages pupils to develop the skills, confidence and motivation needed to study effectively on their own. This is vital for pupils; given the importance of life-long learning and adaptability
- It should encourage enjoyment of learning and promote the idea that learning can, should and does occur outside lessons as well as inside them. It also encourages pupils to explore a variety of diverse sources of knowledge and ideas, such as the School and other libraries, books, journals, the internet, family and friends
- It can help to consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding developed at School
- It can help extend school learning, e.g. through additional reading, research and project work
- It may help to prepare pupils for work to be done in future lessons
- It encourages parental involvement in pupils’ school-related work and encourages a partnership between School and home
- It helps manage particular demands, such as coursework

Meaningful homework will:

- Be challenging, relevant and of interest to pupils
- Be appropriately differentiated and fully inclusive
- Be carefully planned and appropriately integrated with class work and/or schemes of work in such a way that facilitates an application grade to be awarded at least once per cycle
- Promote independent thinking and learning, with appropriate support and guidance
- Be clearly explained i.e. pupils should understand the requirements of the task and the outcomes expected
- Be properly recorded in school planners and logged by teacher as a firefly task.
- Be manageable and, where necessary, appropriately structured. Larger, longer tasks, covering more than one homework may involve intermediate deadlines and tasks
- Time-bound; pupils should be able to complete homework to a high standard in the time allocated.

- Take a variety of forms; reading, research, written tasks or exercises, project work, preparation of presentations, learning for a test, etc. Homework may occasionally involve completing work set in class.

It is important to recognise that:

- The frequency and nature of homework will vary according to subject.
- There will be some variation from week to week depending on the topics and skills being taught in a particular subject
- Although homework should be a regular part of planning for learning, we do not encourage the setting of homework for the sake of meeting the homework timetable (published annually for KS3 & KS4)
- The time allocation is necessarily only a general indicator of the time to be spent but is 20 minutes per subject at KS3, 30 minutes per subject at KS4 and approximately 1 hour per day on each subject in the VI Form.

Feedback on homework:

- All homework completed by pupils should be acknowledged, appropriately assessed according to the School Assessment Policy and Marking Policy, (to include a grade for both effort and Attainment) and written feedback given within the completion of the timetable cycle
- Feedback should, wherever possible, be formative, indicating how improvement could be possible and the next steps that pupils need to take in order to improve (Refer to the Whole School Marking Policy for further detail).
- Parents should be aware that homework may *occasionally* be marked by pupils themselves as part of a self and peer-marking programme

Rewards and praise:

Effort and attainment with homework will be valued and recognised by teacher comment, both written and verbal, and through the use of the school rewards system. As for all pieces of work, a merit or credit may be awarded for especially good and outstanding work respectively.

The pupil tracking system will automatically keep tutors, Heads of House, Heads of Department and the Deputy Head (Academic) informed appropriately of merits, credits and conversely any logged concerns regarding homework.

Absence & Courtesies:

When pupils are selected to participate in extra-curricular activities which involve absence from lessons then the usual courtesies must be followed.

Pupils must **ask** staff whose lessons are likely to be affected for permission to miss the lesson. Wherever possible, permission should be sought in a timely manner and not on the day of the absence.

Pupils must make every effort *themselves* to find out what work was missed and to catch-up on both classwork and prep.

Pupils who repeatedly fail to catch-up or whose academic progress is compromised by participation in extra-curricular opportunities may find themselves ineligible for future selection.

Colleagues who are responsible for the activity are required to distribute a list of those pupils involved to all staff in timely manner to assist with planning.

Staff have the discretion to refuse the request for a pupil to miss a lesson, *before the day of the absence*, and must inform the colleague who is responsible for the activity to facilitate contingency arrangements to be made.

Failure to complete homework/meet deadlines:

Pupils are expected to:

- Complete homework to the best of their ability, in the allocated time
- Use firefly to actively plan and manage their homework and meet deadlines. If pupils know that they will find it difficult to meet a deadline for valid reasons, such as a school evening trip, sporting commitment or other personal reasons, they should inform their teacher and negotiate an agreed extension
- Failure to complete homework will result initially in a negative incident being logged on the pupil tracking system and usually a department detention. Persistent incidents of homework not being completed will result in the pupil's tutor/Head of School meeting with the pupil and will normally also result in a school detention. The Head of School may place the pupil on a targeted 'report' for homework which is filled in by each teacher of that pupil in lessons. In difficult cases, the Head of School and/or Deputy Head (Academic) would contact parents regarding the persistent failure to produce homework usually resulting in a meeting to discuss the matter fully.

Role of Parents:

The school seeks to work positively in partnership with parents to help to support the learning of pupils. Parents can help to ensure that homework is as effective as possible in various ways, such as:

- Providing a structured time and a suitable place in which pupils can do their homework.
- Making it clear to their children that they value homework and believe that it can help their children to make good progress.
- Encouraging children in their homework tasks
- Helping children with the organisational skills required for independent study
- Checking the Firefly parent app, and signing planners weekly to confirm that homework has been completed. Form tutors monitor homework through checking the pupil planner on a regular basis

Deputy Head (Academic)
September 2024