



## Maria Fidelis Catholic School Homework Policy

RATIFIED  
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### Introduction

Homework plays a vital role in consolidating and extending learning, raising standards of achievement and is fundamental to success, both as a student and in adult life. At Maria Fidelis, home study is an integral part of the curriculum, planned and prepared alongside schemes of work. The aim of this policy is to state our approach to home study, emphasising its importance in the curriculum, and to outline our expectations of students, teachers and families.

### The Purpose of Homework

Homework:

- Encourages regular study habits, perseverance and self discipline for lifelong learning.
- Provides opportunities for students to consolidate and reinforce skills, knowledge and understanding acquired in lessons.
- Enables students to extend and enhance their learning in a subject or topic.
- Allows students to develop independent learning skills encouraging ownership and responsibility for learning.
- Is an important strategy for encouraging motivation, creativity and initiative.
- Can open up the curriculum, exploiting materials and resources not always available in the classroom.
- Provides feedback in the evaluation of teaching.
- Fosters a partnership between home and school by providing parents with an opportunity to support their child's learning.

Students need to:

- Be clear on the need for and benefits of homework.
- Be able or enabled to organise their work.
- Know how, when and where to best do their homework; they should be supported to be able to make relevant choices for their own circumstances.
- Be supported to be able to assess the quality of work they have done.
- Know how and when to involve others and what support is available.

### The Nature of Homework

Good homework will involve a variety of activities or tasks consolidating and developing knowledge and understanding as well as subject specific and generic skills designed to support subject progression or learning in a wider sense. Finishing tasks from class work will generally be avoided. In the main activities will be designed to allow for creativity and some choice in terms of how students can present their work. Homework does not have to be a solitary activity. Cooperative research assignments, for example, may be set in part to build and promote collaborative and social skills.

### Homework will include the following:

Independent learning

Consolidating and extending understanding, knowledge and skills from class

Extended writing

Simple experiments

Reading books, magazines, journals, newspapers, other articles

Research work, fact finding, gathering information, gathering or analysing sources, evaluating evidence, forming judgements

Interviewing

Evaluating learning

Extended Projects/ structured tasks within extended projects

Designing

Making models

Practising a particular skill Listening to/watching a particular relevant broadcast or film

Revision

Forward planning, preparation for future lessons

## **The setting of Homework**

The nature and frequency of homework will vary according to the subject and year group. It is not appropriate therefore to adopt a 'one size fits all' approach – the schedule for homework in year 7 is different to that in year 10.

Although the amount of time spent on home study each night can vary the expectation is that students will spend the following time on home study each evening:

- **Years 7-8:**  
1-1.5 hours of home study per evening (30-45 minutes per subject). Students will be set twice weekly home study in each of English and Maths and weekly home study in all other subjects
- **Years 9-11:**  
2 hours per evening (1 hour per subject). Homework is set each lesson in all subjects.
- **Years 12-13:**  
3.5 hours per evening. 2-3 hours per subject.

## **Principles and Procedures**

- Best practice is for homework to be written into journals a half term in advance so that it is given the priority that it needs. This also helps to focus students and plan how they might go about the work in light of the lesson.
- Students must understand the purpose of the homework activities. It should be clear to students how their home study consolidates and extends the work they are doing in school.
- The level of difficulty of homework must take account of students' needs and abilities. The homework should challenge students but not be so difficult that it is beyond the capabilities of students. Homework must therefore be clearly differentiated – extending all but providing increased challenge for the most able and support for those who need it.
- Students must be aware of the standard of work expected – the success criteria for homework must be clear to all students. Homework must be clear in terms of i) what is expected of each student ii) when it is to be completed iii) where it is to be done (which book etc).
- Teachers must ensure that students fully record homework in their journals. Sufficient time and assistance should be given to the less able in order that they may record their homework. Teachers must check that students have recorded homework in journals prior to students leaving the lesson. If no homework has been set this must be clearly recorded in journals so that parents are advised.

- Assignments and/ or projects set as home study must have clear guidelines and a submission date. These activities may last 3/4 weeks (i) gathering ideas (ii) sorting ideas (iii) expressing ideas. Students will be asked to present their ideas / work in the interim.
- Where students are working on an extended assignment / controlled assessments as part of an ongoing home study the progress of the work must be regularly monitored and reviewed and a record maintained of student progress.
- A learning homework must be tested, in an appropriate way, soon after it has been set.
- It is unacceptable for students not to submit homework by the deadline.
- Students submitting poor quality homework or below that of their target will be required to repeat it in Catch-up. Staff must always reinforce high expectations.
- Homework must be assessed in accordance with the School Assessment Policy.
- At KS5 there is an increasing emphasis on independent study outside of lessons. Class teachers will advise students on the nature and types of independent work to support study in the sixth form and the time that should be allocated to such work. As part of this work students are expected to regularly review past work and engage in wider reading.

### **Assessment and marking of homework**

- Homework must be marked and returned to students within two weeks of the submission date.
- All teachers must mark homework in accordance with the school's Assessment, Policy and support the development of literacy skills.
- Students must be provided with diagnostic comments acknowledging what has been done well and providing a clear focus for future improvement. Comments should refer to the success criteria that were made explicit to the students when the work was set.
- Assessment and marking should provide teachers with feedback on how well students have understood the current work and so help to plan future lessons and or individual support that might be needed.
- Teachers must encourage students to improve homework and act on advice given through marking or oral feedback. This may take various forms, for example completing corrections, redrafting essays in light of teacher comments etc. Time should be provided to allow students to respond appropriately to feedback.

### **Support for homework**

The school issues generic advice for families on how they can support the learning of their children. In addition the following forms of support are available to students:

- Many departments provide after-school support for students.
- Students having difficulty with home study are advised to speak with their teachers – support will always be provided.
- The school library and IT rooms provide facilities and resources to support student learning.
- Support for the development of study skills is built into the curriculum provision especially in year 7.

## **Responsibilities**

### **The role of the student**

- To ensure that they have clearly understood the task/ activity set, recorded it in their journal and respond fully – giving sufficient time (at least 45 minutes at KS3 and one hour at KS4 per subject) to ensure a high quality response.
- To ensure that homework is completed and handed in to meet the deadline.
- To attempt all work and give their best. (Students must follow the school's requirements outlined in the students' checklist in all student books).
- To meet the class teacher for support in advance of the deadline should there be any difficulty with homework.
- To act on the advice given to them through the teacher comments – these may be signposted using EBI (Even Better If...) – by improving the work in response to the teacher's comments.
- To follow deadlines for large assignments to ensure adequate progress and so maximise potential.
- To catch up on all class work and homework when absent.

### **The role of the parents/carers**

The role of the parent/carer is crucial if a child is to gain success from home study.

Parents/carers can assist by:

- Providing a table, chair and a quiet place to work.
- Ensuring that homework is completed without the distractions of phones, TV etc.
- Checking the time spent on individual tasks.
- Checking the presentation and where possible the content of all home study.
- Signing the journal each week.
- Letting the school know if there are any problems with homework that cannot be resolved. Help can be sought by contacting the Head of Department or SSO.

### **Role of Class Teacher**

- To ensure that schemes of work are followed and meaningful home study activities are set to cater for the range of students' needs.
- To set, assess and record home study activities in line with school and departmental policy.
- To explain clearly the reasons for the homework in terms of the learning objectives.
- To share the specific assessment criteria for the homework.
- To ensure that student progress on homework is monitored and recorded in line with school and departmental policy.
- To adhere to school and departmental policy with regard to students who either do not complete homework or produce homework of an unsatisfactory standard.
- To check journals before the end of lessons to ensure that homework details are fully recorded.
- Ensure that students who are absent from a lesson complete the homework activities set – time must be taken to get students up to date with work so that they do not feel left behind and so lose confidence.

### **Role of Heads of Department**

Heads of Department are to ensure that the principles and procedures outlined in this policy are understood and implemented consistently by all departmental staff. Specifically a Head of Department should:

- Ensure that all schemes of work are reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis ensuring that, where the homework activity is specified, it meets the criteria within this policy. In particular homework must challenge students whilst at the same time being appropriate to the age, ability and circumstances of the students, taking into account special educational needs.
- Ensure that departmental members set and assess homework in line with school policy through teacher planner checks; work sampling and feedback from students.
- Ensure that all staff monitor and record student progress on homework activities in line with school and departmental policy.
- Ensure that there are effective and consistent procedures to deal with students who either do not complete homework or who complete homework to an unsatisfactory standard.
- Give time to the discussion and development of engaging homework activities through departmental meetings.
- To monitor and evaluate the homework policy within their subject area.

### **Role of Senior Leadership Team**

- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy in supporting student learning, progression and achievement.
- To review the home study policy every two years.
- To ensure robust quality assurance systems with regards this policy.
- To review and support staff training needs in respect of this policy.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

SLT and Heads of Department will monitor homework through reviewing schemes of work / lesson plans, teacher planners, journal checks and auditing student work.

On an annual basis parents will be surveyed for their views through the parent questionnaire.

The views of students will be sought through the class discussions with SLT and through student questionnaires.

**Signed by Chair of Governors**

**Modesto Tondelli**

**Date: 26 June 2017**

**Date of Review: June 2019**