

TCS Homework Policy

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Policy prepared / reviewed by: GEG / Assistant Headteacher

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1. Rationale

This policy is designed to provide a coherent framework from which departments can develop a consistent and effective approach to homework taking into consideration students of all ages and levels of ability.

At TCS we believe that homework is important in:

- reinforcing positive attitudes to school work;
- encouraging and developing self-organisation and self-discipline;
- reinforcing, broadening and extending the school curriculum;
- developing the home/school partnership;
- preparing students for examinations;
- preparing students for life opportunities and experiences.

2. The purposes of homework

There are many reasons for setting homework, the most important ones being to:

- encourage and develop self-discipline and study habits;
- reinforce class work and consolidate learning;
- provide opportunities for teachers to assess students' progress and to maintain a dialogue with the student about their learning;
- give students experience of working on their own, and to develop in students a sense of responsibility for, and commitment to, their own learning;
- involve parents in the educational process and provide an insight into the work of the student.

3. Principles underlying homework policy and practice

- Homework should be carefully planned and be an integral part of learning.
- Students should be adequately prepared for the completion of tasks set.
- Homework should be issued to all year groups, in all subjects and to all students.
- Homework should be issued in appropriate quantities and completion dates should be both clear and reasonable.
- There should be a clear rationale for the task, linked to the learning in the subject.

4. Types of homework

Homework tasks should be set to reflect ongoing class work across the curriculum. The list below is not exhaustive.

Homework can take the form of:

- Further examples of tasks undertaken in class and designed to reinforce what has been learned
- Completing work begun in class
- Pre-learning work that will be covered in the next lessons (flipped learning)
- Reviewing, and, if appropriate, memorising what has been learned in class
- Follow-up work to assessment, ensuring that the student learns from errors
- An extended task or project, spanning several weeks (it is important the teacher has built in check points for the project, where students will have to submit the work they have completed so far, and be given some feedback on the work completed so far)
- Researching at home or in libraries using a variety of sources including ICT
- Revising and preparing for tests / examinations (it is important that teachers monitor the revision and ask to see evidence the student has revised)

5. Frequency and duration of homework tasks

Homework is set when appropriate for every year group. Homework tasks are set of appropriate length for the year group of the student. For example, KS3 homework tasks are generally shorter in length than KS4 tasks. A week is normally given for completion of homework tasks. Year 11 will have homework set as revision more frequently towards their exams.

6. Homework timetable

The school does not publish a prescriptive homework timetable. Teachers are expected to adhere to the arrangements described above, and to set homework with a reasonable deadline for completion (around a week is normal; it is not usually expected that students would have to hand in homework the next day, for example). Students are expected to develop their organisational skills by planning the completion of their homework tasks.

7. The setting and recording of homework activities

Teachers will set homework through the online resource “Show My Homework” (SMHW) (<https://testbourne.showmyhomework.co.uk/>)

Teachers will upload the details of the homework including the nature of the task and instruction for its completion, the due date and other instructions. The teacher will inform the class that homework has been set. The teacher may also attach other resources that may be required such as supplementary worksheets, links to website or videos etc.

Each student has a personal log in for the site that presents them with their personal calendar which shows them what tasks have been set, how long to the deadline for each task and so on. Students can also mark tasks as having been completed to help them with their organisation.

Please note that it is possible to view all homework tasks without logging in; students can use various filters (year group, subject etc) to find the homework tasks that apply to them. Forgotten passwords will not be accepted as a reason for failing to complete a homework task.

Parents and carers will also be allocated a log in to enable them to support their child's organisation and completion of homework. This is particularly important for younger students.

Students that do not have access to the internet at home can use computers around the school, for example at lunchtime in departments.

There is also a SMHW app for Android and iOS devices which is free to download.

8. Students failing to complete homework

Teachers will set sanctions for homework that is not completed. Excuses such as being absent or unable to log in to Show My Homework are not reasonable if there has been sufficient time to remedy these issues.

If your child is unable to meet a homework deadline they should speak to the teacher directly.

Appendix: EFF Toolkit information

How effective is homework?

On average, the impact of homework on learning is consistently positive (leading to on average five months' additional progress). However, beneath this average there is a wide variation in potential impact, suggesting that **how homework is set** is likely to be very important.

There is some evidence that homework is **most effective** when used as a **short and focused intervention** (e.g. in the form of a project or specific target connected with a particular element of learning) with some exceptional studies showing up to eight months' positive impact on attainment. Benefits are likely to be more modest, up to two to three months' progress on average, if homework is more routinely set (e.g. learning vocabulary or completing problem sheets in mathematics every day).

Evidence also suggests that how homework relates to learning during normal school time is important. **In the most effective examples homework was an integral part of learning, rather than an add-on.** To maximise impact, it also appears to be important that students are provided with **high quality feedback on their work.** Studies imply that there is an optimum amount of homework of between **1 and 2 hours per school day (slightly longer for older pupils)**, with effects diminishing as the time that students spend on homework increases.

How secure is the evidence?

Homework has been extensively studied. However, studies have mainly looked at the correlation between homework and how well schools perform. It is certainly the case that schools whose pupils do homework tend to perform well, but it is less clear that the homework is the reason why they are successful.

There are a smaller number of studies which have investigated what happens when homework is introduced and compared with classes where homework is not given. These studies tend to show that homework is beneficial, though the evidence is less secure.

Key points:

1. Planned and focused activities are more beneficial than homework which is more regular but may be routine or not linked with what is being learned in class.
2. It should not be used as a punishment or penalty for poor performance.
3. A variety of tasks with different levels of challenge is likely to be beneficial.
4. The quality of homework is more important than the quantity. Pupils should receive specific and timely feedback on homework.
5. Have you made the purpose of homework clear to children (e.g. to increase a specific area of knowledge, or fluency in a particular area)?