

# Saint John Houghton Catholic Voluntary Academy

## Homework Policy



Reviewed by the Governing Body: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013, November 2016

Date for next Review: November 2017

### Our Mission

Saint John Houghton is a Catholic Secondary Academy offering a Christian education, where prayer, worship and liturgy are integral parts of our daily life.

We aspire, as a school:

- To be recognised for the quality of care extended to all associated with us and to respect each person's dignity and uniqueness
- To make the faith life of the school inform and effect work in all areas of the curriculum
- To be a 'family', embracing home and parish, with an awareness of its responsibilities to both local and worldwide communities
- To establish a whole curriculum which will balance the highest academic standards with the life skills and critical awareness necessary to enable all students to reach their full potential and to respond to the needs of society

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### Rationale and Definition

Homework is not an optional extra but an important and valuable aspect of students' learning, raising standards and improving the quality of education in schools. Here at Saint John Houghton Catholic Academy we believe homework should be purposeful and contribute to the overall development of each child entrusted in our care.

Homework is work that is set to be done outside the timetabled curriculum. It contains an element of independent study in that it is not usually directly supervised by a teacher. It is important in raising student achievement.

Not all homework is done at home; in fact, for some students who find it hard to work at home, or for some tasks which may require resources (books, software, equipment) more readily available at school, it is necessary or desirable to carry out the task at school. Some departments run a lunchtime club and there is an afterschool club every night in the LRC to support this.

Homework enhances student learning, improves achievement and develops students' study skills and as such is an integral part of the curriculum. It requires careful planning and integration into the scheme of work of each curriculum area.

### Purpose

- Provide opportunities for students to work independently and to develop the confidence and self-discipline to work on their own, an essential skill for adult life.
- Help students recognise the link between good study habits and higher standards of achievement.
- Check that students have understood class work.
- Consolidate or extend work covered in school.

- Prepare for future lessons.
- Give time for more extensive coverage of the curriculum, through integrated planning of class work and homework.
- Make more effective use of lessons by focusing on those activities, which require more direct teaching, with other tasks, not dependent on the teacher, being set for homework.
- Improve students' attitudes to learning.
- Improve students' organisational and study skills.
- Raise the standard of achievement.
- Help parents understand what their children are learning in school and to encourage them to participate

### Proposed Principles

- Homework should be set for all students in all subjects, catering for their specific needs.
- Teaching staff will ensure that all homework is set via the Show My Homework platform.
- Each homework task should be capable of completion within a reasonable time limit.
- Homework should increase in complexity and duration as students proceed through the school.
- Homework should be marked/ assessed in line with each Curriculum area's Assessment Policy.

### Expectations

**Time:** The expectation is that students spend the following amount of time on homework:

Year 7 - 9	1 hour per day, Monday to Thursday Weekend
Years 10 and 11	2 hours per day, Monday to Thursday Weekend

**Assignment based Homework:** In non-core subjects, a yearly timetable of homework is provided for Years 7 – 9. Students will be expected to complete homework in only two subjects maximum in each term. These tasks should aim to develop depth of understanding around topics taught. They may be tasks that a split into mini tasks over time.

**Homework Tasks:** All homework should be purposeful and assist learning and may include the following:

- Independent learning
- Practice - learning by doing
- Building on work done in class, not necessarily finishing off work done in class
- Research
- Interviews
- Completion of coursework assignments
- Using ICT

- Using online set homework such as MathsWatch, Doodle and Kerboodle
- Reading
- Drawing
- Preparation for examinations and presentations
- Recording

**Extension tasks:** These should be used when there may be no homework set for a subject or if a student requires more work to reach the expected level of homework. These tasks are set on the school website under each curriculum area.

**Feedback:** Homework will be marked or monitored and feedback given to students, usually no longer than one week after homework is handed in. Feedback could take a variety of forms e.g. Peer marking, Discussion, Peer or self assessment, Oral feedback from teacher, Formal marking.

**Show My Homework:** All students will be able to access set homework via an online platform. This platform is accessible by parents too. The platform gives description of the homework set, set and due dates as well as any resources required to complete the tasks

**Non-completion of homework:** Guided by the principles of this policy, teachers are encouraged to take personal responsibility and should determine the reason for non-completion and provide support where appropriate. Special consideration concerning those with learning needs should be given and at the minimum, the work set should be something which the student can do. Where a student has not completed or handed homework, the following system will be applied:

1. When a student misses a piece of homework, a demerit is issued. At the end of a week, a text is sent to parents informing them of this. It is the teacher's responsibility to update the data sheet on Go4 schools by 12.30 on Friday.
2. A student may still be asked for the homework to be completed. If this is the case, a further demerit may be issued by the teacher for not handing in the work or not attending the homework club in school.
3. The SIR co-ordinator will monitor the demerits and record missed homework. When 5 have been missed a letter will be sent by the PAL. At 10 missed HW, the AH will contact parents to discuss the issue with them and may invite them in.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Curriculum Leaders will regularly monitor homework within their department in the course of monitoring the curriculum in their area of responsibility. The Progress leaders and Assistant Headteacher will monitor homework across the school. This will be done in a number of ways e.g. Through the Social Inclusion Co-ordinator checking planners. They will also talk to students and staff and look at students' work. He/she will check that:

- The key principles of this policy are being achieved
- The full range of types of homework are being set
- Homework is set in accordance with department policy
- Teachers are setting homework according to school policy

They will report back to the Leadership Membership Team each term. General feedback will also be given to the whole staff. Work and book scrutinies by the Leadership Team during formal and informal observations will also look at homework.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Headteacher** will ensure that homework is an integral part of the curriculum and is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning.

**Teachers** will be responsible for:

- Planning relevant homework (students will not usually be given only a single night to complete homework).
- Setting and marking homework in line with school policy. Giving prompt, diagnostic feedback on homework.
- Giving opportunities, where appropriate, to improve work based on feedback.
- Ensuring students understand the purpose of the homework tasks.
- Using the Show My Homework platform for setting homework.
- Ensure that it is clear to students how their homework consolidates and extends the work they are doing in school.
- Ensuring students' have access to the necessary resources to allow them to complete homework set.
- The amount of supervision necessary to complete the task and whether this is available (especially SEN
  - students).
- Ensuring that all students' needs have been taken into account when setting homework tasks.
- Developing a positive mindset towards homework, as this is important in helping to raise standards
- Ensuring that school policy is followed when homework is not completed.
- Setting homework that is varied in nature e.g. Preparation for new areas of learning; consolidation of skills already taught; research; creative tasks, preparation for presentations and examinations

**Tutors and Support Tutors** will be responsible for:

- Handing out homework guidelines at the start of each year
- Checking and signing student planners every 2 weeks
- Responding to parents' /carers' notes written in planners, about homework

**Students** will be responsible for:

- Using the Show My Homework platform to check homework set each day
- Ensuring that they understand the tasks set
- Demonstrating a commitment to spending suitable time to completing the tasks set
- Organising their time in order to do the tasks set
- Exercising initiative and improving their problem-solving skills and developing their independent study skills
- Taking pride in their homework and completing it to the best of their ability
- Handing their homework in on time

**Parents** are expected to be responsible for:

- Being active partners in supporting learning. This supportive role changes as students move through the school
- Using the Show My Homework platform to monitor the homework set and ensuring work is completed
- Making it clear to students how much they value homework and supporting the school by explaining how it can help their learning
- Communicating with the their child's teacher if there is an issue
- Signing planners on a weekly basis to show that they are aware that the homework set has been completed or attempted
- Providing a peaceful and comfortable place where their child can concentrate on their homework
- Ensuring that their child has access to necessary resources/equipment
- Praising and encouraging their child to take pride in their homework
- Parents should indicate where substantial help has been given with their child's homework e.g. by pencil notation in the margin.