



THE NELSON THOMLINSON SCHOOL

HOMEWORK POLICY 2014

Principles

Correctly used, homework is an important part of the learning process. It involves pupils more in their own learning and encourages them to take greater responsibility for it. It helps them become more self-reliant and independent. It can enhance pupil progress within the curriculum, and raise achievement. It can help parents to take a more active part in their children's progress. Finally, it can lead to more effective use of lesson time.

There are five general principles that support the use of homework within the Curriculum at NTS. They support the notion that homework helps develop our students as independent learners. As a result, homework should always be:

- **Timely** – the right amount on the right day
- **Regular** – to support a routine that encourages time management and self-responsibility
- **Motivating** – we want pupils to want to learn so that they improve over time
- **Purposeful** – there must be a clear outcome from the work that supports learning
- **Differentiated** – where possible

Homework types

It is school policy that homework should be set in line with the homework timetable. However, it is important that it should be set with a purpose and not simply as a matter of course. Very occasionally, a teacher may, therefore, choose not to set homework but this should be regarded as the exception rather than the rule.

In general, a homework assignment can serve one or more of the following purposes:

- **Preparation** so that the next lesson can take a more interactive form. This might take the form of reading or research. (Sometimes referred to as “flipped learning”.)
- **Practice** in various skills – for example mathematical, language, note-making or essay writing.
- **Learning** a stated section of work for a test.
- **Developing study skills** - especially revision. Good homework may also develop self-confidence, self-discipline and a motivation to succeed.
- Saving time in class, e.g. performing tasks that do not require teacher supervision/guidance/input

Occasionally, homework that consists of merely finishing a piece of classwork may be set, but this should not be the norm. (It can mean that hard-working students end up with comparatively little to do. It can also penalise slower workers.) Homework should never be set as a punishment.

The review of homework carried out in September 2013 found that there are nine types of homework activity used across the NTS curriculum:

<p>1. Practice activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Repeat skills/knowledge until secure b. Analyse, evaluate and reflect c. Exam preparation 	<p>2. Learning activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Factual recall b. New terminology c. Memorising through revision
<p>3. Research activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Gathering information b. Organisation of information c. Steps in a larger project 	<p>4. Creative activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Quizzes on a topic to test each other b. Extended projects c. Revision toolkits
<p>5. Extended outcome activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Written work developing knowledge, understanding and skills gained in lessons b. Develop wider awareness 	<p>6. On-line activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Moodle b. Kerboodle c. Bitesize
<p>7. Literacy practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Spelling, punctuation and grammar b. Reading for next lesson 	<p>8. Preparation activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Organising ingredients b. Planning
<p>9. Teacher set, or student choice activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Homework challenges 	

Normal Pattern

The volume of homework each pupil receives is determined by the homework timetable. Subject specific allocations are available on request. However, the majority of pupils will receive homework as follows:

Key Stage 3:

On average, each pupil will receive one or two homeworks per night per week. Subjects with more than one lesson per week may set two homeworks per week. Subjects with one lesson per week, eg. RE, may set homework once per fortnight. Practical subjects, eg. Art and Technology may set homework in the form of projects that will run over each curriculum module.

The notional time that students are expected to spend on each homework task is as follows:

- Year 7: 20 minutes
- Year 8: 25 minutes
- Year 9: 30 minutes

Key Stage 4:

Most subjects have two homework sessions per week, with each piece being 30 to 40 minutes on average. Practical subjects, e.g. Art and Technology usually set homework assignments once per week, with the duration being extended accordingly. Exceptions are PSHRE/PSHEC and Games, where none is set.

Sixth Form:

In the Lower Sixth, GCE students are expected to complete at least 2 hours homework per week per subject. In the Upper Sixth, where students generally take fewer subjects, this can be expected to rise to between 4 and 5 hours per subject per week. This is because most subjects have two teachers, and each one will set homework.

All Sixth Form students are also expected to use their study periods effectively. This time should be used for:

- 'Reading around the subject' – independent learning to enhance knowledge and understanding of the key concepts covered during lessons
- Homework development – ensuring that all necessary information is collected before starting a homework task
- Completing extended tasks, or projects
- Developing coursework – in-line with specific subject requirements

Student Planners

All students are issued with a planner in which the homework set is recorded day by day. Subject teachers should be confident when setting homework that the pupil has recorded:

- The task/assignment – accurately transcribed from your instructions
- The length of time you expect the homework to take
- The deadline for submission

The planner has three main uses:

- It serves as an aide-memoire to the pupil, helping with the organisation of books etc.
- It serves as a record for the pupil (and the form tutor) of the work set
- It should help parents to become involved with their children's learning by enabling them to review the homework that has been set

Parents are requested to sign the planner each week. Form tutors should check this weekly. It can also be used by tutors as a way of bringing pressure to bear on individuals whose work is reported as unsatisfactory. They can be asked to produce the planner at registration each morning, correctly completed, together with the homework that has been done the night before.

Marking and monitoring

Homework should be checked promptly by subject teachers, even if detailed marking is delayed for some reason. Unsatisfactory completion should be met with action by the subject teacher. Poor completion of homework over a longer period should be referred to the Head of Department in the first instance. Form tutors and Year Heads should be involved if the problem persists.

For quality assurance, Heads of Department should undertake work scrutiny on a termly basis. This will monitor the quality of homework set, and the standard of pupil response. The quality of marking and feedback should also be monitored. Heads of Year should sample pupil planners to ensure that all pupils are using their planner properly.

Revised:

NP, March 2014