

Homework Policy

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Reviewed Annually



Why is homework important?

Learning at home is an essential part of a good education. Regular homework is important.

- It gives pupils the opportunity to practise for themselves the tasks done in class and contributes towards improving a range of important skills
- It builds confidence and assists young people to personalise their learning. It allows children to work at a pace which suits them and their ability
- It provides the opportunity for pupils to extend their learning and undertake further independent research.

The teachers at Cardinal Allen are constantly evaluating strategies to improve the value of homework and make the assessment process even more useful for pupils as well as for themselves. We will be providing further information to you during the year about any formal assessments made on your child and their progress in school.

Role of parents

Parents play a key role in the education of their children. In early stages parent/child dialogue can promote language and numeracy skills and as pupils progress through primary and secondary school parents can provide a supportive environment in which the young person can develop the necessary study skills to move towards independent learning. Our homework policy takes account of parents as partners in learning.

A definition of homework

Homework is any relevant task or activity selected by the teacher, to be completed outside curriculum contact time. While it will usually be done at home, it may also take the form of supported study/homework clubs.

Aims

- to encourage pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning together with the development of organisational and study skills and workload management.
- to promote self-reliance and self-confidence and encourage the habit of independent learning
- to widen the learning experience by encouraging pupils to use materials and sources of information not available in the classroom
- to assist pupils preparing for National Qualifications to meet deadlines and target dates

Effective homework

To be effective homework should be:

- varied and interesting;
- appropriate to the needs and abilities of the pupil;
- well explained with a clear purpose understood by all;
- recognised and rewarded by meaningful and helpful feedback given as soon as possible;
- relevant to the ongoing work of the class or group;
- manageable within a reasonable amount of time.

What should you expect?

- all pupils will be issued with a *Student Planner* at the start of the academic year in which they should record set tasks and in which you should feel free to make comments, check and sign weekly
- for Key Stage 3 pupils, the homework schedule is printed in the front of the Student Planner as well as in the [Home Learning Zone](#) which is accessible via the school website. The HLZ also contains details and many of the resources for each of the tasks set across Years 7, 8 and 9
- the schedule for Key Stage 4 pupils is issued at the start of the academic year and is also available in the Home Learning Zone

Time allocation

The nature of the homework task and the amount will vary with the age, ability and needs of the pupil. It is impossible to give an exact allocation of time that a child might spend on homework because some take longer than others; the following guide for each week might be helpful:

Year 7 3–5 hrs	Year 8 4–6 hrs	Year 9 5–7 hrs
Year 10 6–8 hours	Year 11 10–14 hours	

Framework for support

The following support strategies are incorporated into our practice:

- parent-friendly guides and workshops on policy and practices
- user-friendly guides to effective personal study for pupils
- tasks to incorporate the full range of effective teaching and learning strategies which will give pupils opportunities to practise effective techniques such as:
 - mind mapping
 - memory techniques
 - summarising - note taking
 - speed reading
- support for pupils who have difficulty in working or completing tasks at home by providing alternative time slots and venues as appropriate;
- mechanisms to inform parents when a pupil consistently fails to complete homework and to enlist their support;
- homework diaries/planners which act as a record of work set and as a liaison link between parents and the school. The diaries may also be useful in the area of target setting and recording achievement;
- effective use of existing support mechanisms e.g. primary/secondary data transfer guidance, year monitoring, target setting;
- effective structures for monitoring homework policy in practice both from the perspective of whole school monitoring and key stage/departmental monitoring.

Working with your child

- Nominate somewhere at home as a homework area. It needs a flat surface, a good light source and resources such as pens, pencils, rulers, scissors, glue, dictionary and notebook to hand.
- Set up a daily routine based on the timetable given. Add reading which vastly expands learning for children.
- It's a good idea if your child has a break and something to eat before starting on homework.
- Ask your child to explain the homework task and how it follows on from what they were studying at school.
- Be interested and be on hand to talk to your child about what they have learnt so far.
- Help your child to become an independent learner. Explain how to look up information or find a word in a dictionary rather than simply giving an answer in order to get the task finished.
- Don't be tempted to teach your child methods you used at school.
- Turn off the television while homework is underway but do let your child listen to music at a low volume if they find it helpful.
- Discourage your child from copying when they are asked to do research tasks. Talk about the information together, work out the key facts and help your child to write these down as brief notes.
- Be positive about your child's attempts. If you have concerns about their progress, make an appointment with the school.
- Don't let homework become a chore. Make it a special time that you both look forward to.
- We are extremely keen that parents become fully involved in their children's education but please don't be tempted to correct homework and make your child copy it out. We need to know how much your child understands and can do independently

Useful web resources

[About.com](#) Massive directory of useful links and articles

[Homework High](#) Lots of useful learning resources from Channel 4 covering a broad range of subjects

[BBC Learning](#) Resources and guidance for pupils and parents from the BBC

[DiscoveryEducation.com](#) Across the curriculum, including video guides to support learning

[Homework Elephant.co.uk](#) Resources to help complete your homework assignments with links across the web

[Encyclopedia Britannica](#) An authoritative resource covering almost anything you could want to know

[Topmarks.co.uk](#) More resources and links to games to support your learning and tips for parents

There are obviously lots of subject specific sites that your child's teacher will recommend in addition to the examination board websites at Key Stage 4: [AQA](#), [Edexcel](#), [OCR](#) and [WJEC](#).

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