



Home Learning Policy

HORSFORTH SCHOOL

Home Learning Policy

1 Aim

The aim of this document is to give guidance to staff and all stakeholders around the expectations and procedures associated with home learning for students in all Key Stages at Horsforth School.

2 Context

The Principles of Home Learning at Horsforth

After a review of the evidence, a consideration of the school ethos and an analysis of the socioeconomic characteristics of the students, the home learning procedures at Horsforth School, will be informed by the following principles:

- * Tasks should be precise, structured into departmental schemes of work and should be clearly related to ongoing classroom work (this is especially important for students with low prior achievement);
- * Students with low prior achievement should not be given less home learning than higher-achieving students, but should be offered differentiated tasks (for example through a menu-based system);
- * Subject teachers and departments should retain relative autonomy in deciding what is relevant and effective to their subjects, but there should be a whole-school procedures of developing a bank of best-practice examples;
- * Home learning should be varied and allow for individual initiative and creativity to be harnessed through linking class learning to issues and realities beyond the classroom experience;
- * There should be ongoing staff guidance and support offered to ensure that the setting of home learning should not be to the detriment of students from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- * Home learning feedback should promote self-confidence and understanding as much as possible.

3 Evaluation

This policy will be evaluated every three years by the Curriculum Committee of the Governing Body to ensure it is still fit for purpose. Circumstances may require more frequent modifications.

4 Authors

This policy has been produced by ZMC in June 2016.

5 Procedures

Procedures to support this policy are appended.

Appendix I: Procedures to support the policy

KS3

There is broad agreement amongst staff that home learning at Key Stage 3 (KS3) should inspire inquiry and deeper learning in students rather than introduce them too early into the world of levels and assessment. To this end, home learning at KS3 will represent a continuation of the primary school approach in that students will be encouraged to develop inquiry and creativity through a system of project-based or menu-style home learning tasks.

Departments are expected to structure home learning into their schemes of work, and as much as possible base set work on project or menu based home learning. Home learning should provide students with an opportunity to develop interest and skills in the subject they are exploring. They can be constructed in a range of different ways as is seen fit by individual departments, but at the core the work should encourage initiative, creativity and enquiry.

If possible students should be encouraged to link their learning to mediums and subject matter that they are familiar with and to engage with technology as much as possible.

These procedures and the purpose of home learning at KS3 will be communicated to parents in letter form. They will be directed to the Parents & Carers area of the website, where appropriate ways in which parents can help their child develop key skills on occasions when home learning has not been set can be found. The menu of activities and tasks set will be explicit on the website so that Parents/Carers can support home learning.

KS4

While the principles that underpin the home learning procedures at KS3 should, where possible, still apply, the reality of external examinations must be reflected in the delivery of home learning at KS4. For example in many subjects the demands of coursework will be the main concern, while others will be focused on core requirements of courses, such as reading set texts in English or rehearsal for performance in music or drama.

To reflect this, individual departments and teachers will have the freedom to deliver home learning as they see fit and have the responsibility to ensure that it is planned into schemes of work which are purposeful and where appropriate structured around giving students an enhanced understanding of exam rubric or revision techniques.

KS5

Due to the increased demands for depth of knowledge and higher order skills on post-16 students, home learning should deepen subject knowledge and understanding of the exam rubric to prepare students for the imminent challenge of the move to linear courses. Such learning can be achieved in a number of ways, and individual departments will (as with KS4 provision) have responsibility for developing departmental procedures. To be successful students must participate in on average 10 hours independent study per subject per fortnight, whether that be homework set by the subject teacher, student led learning for example, reading preparation for the next lesson, learning key terms, group rehearsals or preparation for practical exams.

Teachers are encouraged to build on the existing best practice to be found in the “home learning best practice” folder on the X drive, and in particular to consider the practice of “flipping” learning to enable students to develop independent learning skills and to consolidate knowledge acquired through home learning in order to develop higher-order skills in lessons.

Such an approach can be very effective and allows summary assessment to be conducted in class time, providing a more accurate reflection of the examination conditions students will face in external examinations.

Marking & Feedback

There should be a practical and pragmatic approach to the marking of home learning. It is unlikely that individual pieces of homework will be marked with descriptors or grades (unless there is a particular need to do so, e.g. if the work is directly linked to examination technique).

However, where possible work will be annotated to help students move forward with clear targets for improvement. Self and peer assessment will also be used to deliver positive feedback and to showcase individual success (particularly in the case of project-based work).

As a general principle summative assessment should be conducted in classroom time when possible, rather than set for home learning (with the obvious exception of coursework and similar work required at KS4 & KS5).

The Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers should be encouraged to influence home learning less by direct intervention but rather through providing encouragement and creating a positive physical and social environment in which students can complete work. The school will communicate with Parents/Carers to ensure they know how best to support their child's home learning, including suggestions on activities to promote if no home learning is set on a particular day.

Support within School

A range of cultural and socio-economic factors may prevent some students from accessing the kind of social and physical environment required for successful completion of home learning assignments. This should not represent a barrier to learning and the ongoing provision of homework club at lunchtimes and after school will be maintained and advertised to parents and students. The following support is available for students:

- Homework club after school in the ELC
- Library - open at break and lunchtimes for KS3 and 4 students

Other subject-specific support is available and individual departments should provide subject-specific support for students at all key stages, appropriately tailored to the demands of their subjects at all key stages.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Leadership Team	To monitor departmental implementation and review the procedures every three years.
Team Leaders	To ensure that relevant home learning that complies with these whole school procedures is planned into schemes of work.
Classroom Teachers	To ensure that home learning is set according to departmental instructions.
Learning Support Staff	To support students with home learning tasks as required
Form Tutors	To encourage students to take ownership of their learning both in and outside of the classroom, including discussing the quality of their home learning at EOSM reviews and informally in tutor time.
Students	To ensure that all home learning is recorded in the school planner, including the deadline for completion/date to be handed in, and that it is completed to the best of his/her ability.