



## ST PAUL'S HIGH SCHOOL, BESSBROOK HOMEWORK POLICY

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### **Introduction**

As a Catholic Community, inspired by the example of St. Paul, our vision is to endeavour to develop skills and capabilities to help our students grow into healthy mature and successful adults capable of making informed and responsible choices.

To compliment the learning and teaching that takes place in the classroom, we in St Paul's value the important role homework plays in the development of our students as effective independent learners.

### **Rationale**

Research supports the view that students who complete homework outperform those who do not. Homework has the potential to enhance students' study skills, attainment, improve their attitude towards school and reinforce the importance of learning outside the classroom.

### **Types of homework**

Homework can be a variety of tasks ranging from a set of short questions, a writing exercise, learning vocabulary, spellings, research etc to longer assignments that may take a few nights or weeks to fully complete.

Coursework assignments or continuous assessment tasks may be used by some exam classes as homework exercises at KS4 and Post 16. Students must adhere closely to the deadlines given.

### **Aims**

- Homework consolidates, broadens and extends the school curriculum.
- Homework develops the habit of independent study.
- Homework encourages self-organisation and self-discipline.
- Homework helps prepare students for future lessons and assessments.
- Homework builds on the Assessment for Learning approach used in the classroom.
- Homework provides an indication of student progress.
- Homework provides feedback in the evaluation of learning and teaching.
- Homework develops the home-school partnership

# **Roles and Responsibilities**

## **Students**

**The role of each student is to:**

- Bring the student planner to every lesson.
- Listen carefully to homework instructions.
- Record instructions for the task and the deadline date.
- Ensure that homework is completed and submitted on time.
- Make use of all relevant support materials available to them.
- Attempt all work and give of their best.
- Inform the subject teacher of any difficulties.
- Be aware of the consequences for incompleteness of homework.

## **Parents and Carers**

*For the purposes of this document the guardian or carer for the child will be referred to as the 'parent'.*

**Parents can enhance the child's progress by supporting their child in the completion of homework by:**

- Providing a quiet study area wherever possible.
  - Ensuring that sufficient time and effort is given to homework tasks.
  - Encouraging the independent completion of homework, utilising support materials available.
  - Checking and signing the student's planner each week to verify that homework has been completed by the agreed deadline.
  - Contacting the school if there are any issues regarding the student's homework.
- Appendix 1

## **Subject Teachers**

**It is the responsibility of each subject teacher, in line with departmental policy, to:**

- Set purposeful, well planned and varied homework/assignments.
- Endeavour to make homework practices reflect developments within education and range of

**learning styles.**

- Ensure that homework is appropriately differentiated for all students.
- Give full and comprehensive instructions for completion, providing help and support where necessary.
- Set deadlines for completed homework and ensure that they are met.

- Mark and return homework promptly in accordance with the Assessment for Learning strategy.
- Keep records of homework set.
- Record results of all five formal assessments on SIMS Assessment Manager.
- Monitor and record the non-completion of homework.
- Apply procedure for persistent non completion of homework as detailed in Appendix 2
- Inform Head of Department of any concerns in relation to homework in line with policy.
- Implement school rewards and sanctions in line with policy.

Celebrate examples of good homework.

### **Heads of Department**

**The role of the Head of Department is to monitor and review homework and support subject teachers in the implementation of the agreed departmental policy. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to:**

- Consult with colleagues to devise and review a subject specific homework policy.
- Ensure that homework is an integral part of the curriculum and is assigned on a regular basis.
- Lead collaborative department discussions to compile standardised annual formative and summative assessments for each year group.
- Promote standardised practice across the department by regular monitoring strategies, for example, book look, classroom observations and engagement with students.
- Ensure that homework is appropriate in quality and quantity for all ages and abilities.
- Engage with students in all key stages about homework.
- Ensure that homework is part of the agenda at Department meetings.
- Liaise with both the student and the form teacher when persistent issues with homework arise in line with policy.

## **Form Teachers**

### **It is the role of the form teacher to:**

- Check each morning that students have planners with them and to issue temporary daily planner if required. (See appendix 3).
- Ensure that students have listed the subjects taught for each day.
- Check and sign planners weekly to ensure homework is being recorded and parents are also signing the planners.
- Monitor the comments made by class teachers regarding homework
- Implement the appropriate procedures for non-completion of homework (Appendix 2)
- Liaise with parents via standardised letter for persistent non-completion of homework. (See appendix 4).
- Inform Head of Year of any letters issued.

## **Year Heads**

### **It is the responsibility of each Year Head to:**

- Consult with the form teacher and class teacher to monitor student's failure to complete homework.
- Ensure that homework is part of the agenda at pastoral meetings.
- Monitor the signing of planners by both parents and form teachers.
- Communicate and meet with parents/carers of students who persistently fail to complete homework. These meetings will take place with both the Year Head and **SLT** present. (See appendix 5).
- Promote the importance of homework during weekly assemblies.

## **Strategic Leadership Team, SLT**

### **The Strategic Leadership Team is responsible for the implementation of the homework policy at whole-school level.**

#### **It is the responsibility of the Strategic Leadership Team to:**

- Inform parents/carers of the school homework policy via a range of appropriate media.
- Ensure that homework is part of the agenda at Head of Department meetings.
- Support the development of homework programmes through the appropriate provision of relevant resources.
- Monitor, evaluate and review the homework policy in conjunction with the relevant curriculum development teams e.g. whole school book looks.
- Ensure the consistent and effective implementation of the homework policy across all departments.
- Collect, collate and evaluate feedback on homework from all key stakeholders.
- Encourage and disseminate good practice.

## **POLICY INTO PRACTICE:**

### **Recommendations for good practice Routine**

- Homework is issued at the start of the lesson.  
Understanding of homework task should be clarified with at least two students.  
Homework is recorded in student and teacher planner including the submission date.
- Homework is marked in accordance with the Assessment for Learning Strategy and the Departmental Marking Policy.
- Students will be informed and have a clear understanding of the success criteria for all homework tasks.
- Students are rewarded and praised for consistent high standard of homework.  
Non-completion of homework is recorded and appropriate action taken by subject teacher.
- Examples of good homework are celebrated and displayed in the department where possible and recorded on the SIMS Achievement Module.
- Student planner is signed by Parent/Guardian and Form Teacher weekly.

### **Methodology**

- Homework caters for the various learner needs, styles and preferences.
- Homework takes into account the variation of resources available to students.
- Homework tasks are varied, challenging and interesting.
- Support and extension material are made available to cater for differentiated needs.  
When applicable, homework tasks are open-ended and promote imagination, creativity, research and enquiry skills.
- Homework tasks promote self-reflection and evaluation.

### **Homework Incentives and Sanctions**

#### **Homework Incentives**

- Peer and self-assessment should be encouraged.
- High quality homework and a good work ethos should be sensitively praised in class.
- Where appropriate good examples of homework should be showcased within departments.
- Sustained effort and progress in homework should be recognized and maybe rewarded with a positive note in Student Planner

- Achievement merit award to be given for exceptional work on Achievement section of Behaviour Management Module on SIMS

### **Homework Sanctions**

- When homework is not completed, teachers should initially support the student and ensure that the task set meets the student's needs.
- Teachers are advised to follow the flowchart (Appendix 2) as a guide to resolving homework issues.
- If the homework missed is an Formal Assessment the class teacher should start at Stage 2 of the procedure

The non-completion of coursework assignments or continuous assessment tasks in KS4 and Post 16 will be dealt with in compliance with departmental policy.

### **Appendix 1: SUPPORTING MY CHILD'S LEARNING**

Research has shown that children, whose parents are involved in supporting them with completion of their homework, get higher marks, have a better attitude towards learning and develop more confidence. Getting involved with your child's education can make a significant difference to his/her chances of success. As your child gets older, of course, he/she needs to become more independent.

Helping your child to get organised, providing equipment and a quiet place to work and offering lots of encouragement will get him/her off to the right start. Your child's Student Planner should outline the homework that has been set and when it is due. You should check the Planner regularly and sign it at the end of each week.

### **How to help – some general advice**

Make sure that you are familiar with your child's Student Planner.

Nominate somewhere at home as a homework area and have a set time for homework. Set up a daily routine. Plan a homework timetable, so that your child knows what to do and when to do it.

It is a good idea if your child has a break and something to eat before starting homework. Ask your child to explain the homework task and how it follows on from what he/she was studying at school.

Be interested and be on hand to talk to your child about what he/she has learnt.

Help your child to become an **independent learner**. Explain how to look up information rather than simply giving an answer in order to get the task finished.

Try to ensure that your child can access the school's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

from home—Oscail24/7. Turn off the television while homework is being done but do let your child listen to music if he/she finds it helpful and it does not annoy others. Read carefully any comments that your child's teacher makes about his/her work. Discourage him/her from copying without editing when he/she is asked to do research tasks.

Be positive about your child's attempts. If you have concerns about his/her progress, make an appointment to see your child's Form Teacher.

The school is keen that parents become fully involved in their children's education. However, please do not be tempted to do their homework, controlled assessment or coursework for them. If your child is to progress we need to know how much he/she understands and can do independently.

### **Here are some ways you can help:**

- Suggest doing homework as soon as it is received.  
Encourage your child to talk to you when in difficulty, as you may be able to help.
- Make sure your child has a good work---life balance, and does not spend too much time going out with friends, working in a part---time job or sitting at home doing homework.
- Find out about educational resources that may support your child's learning on relevant websites etc.

### **Helping with controlled assessment or coursework**

Good controlled assessment or coursework marks can boost your child's grades.

You can help by:

Finding out about the curriculum and how much work needs to be done.

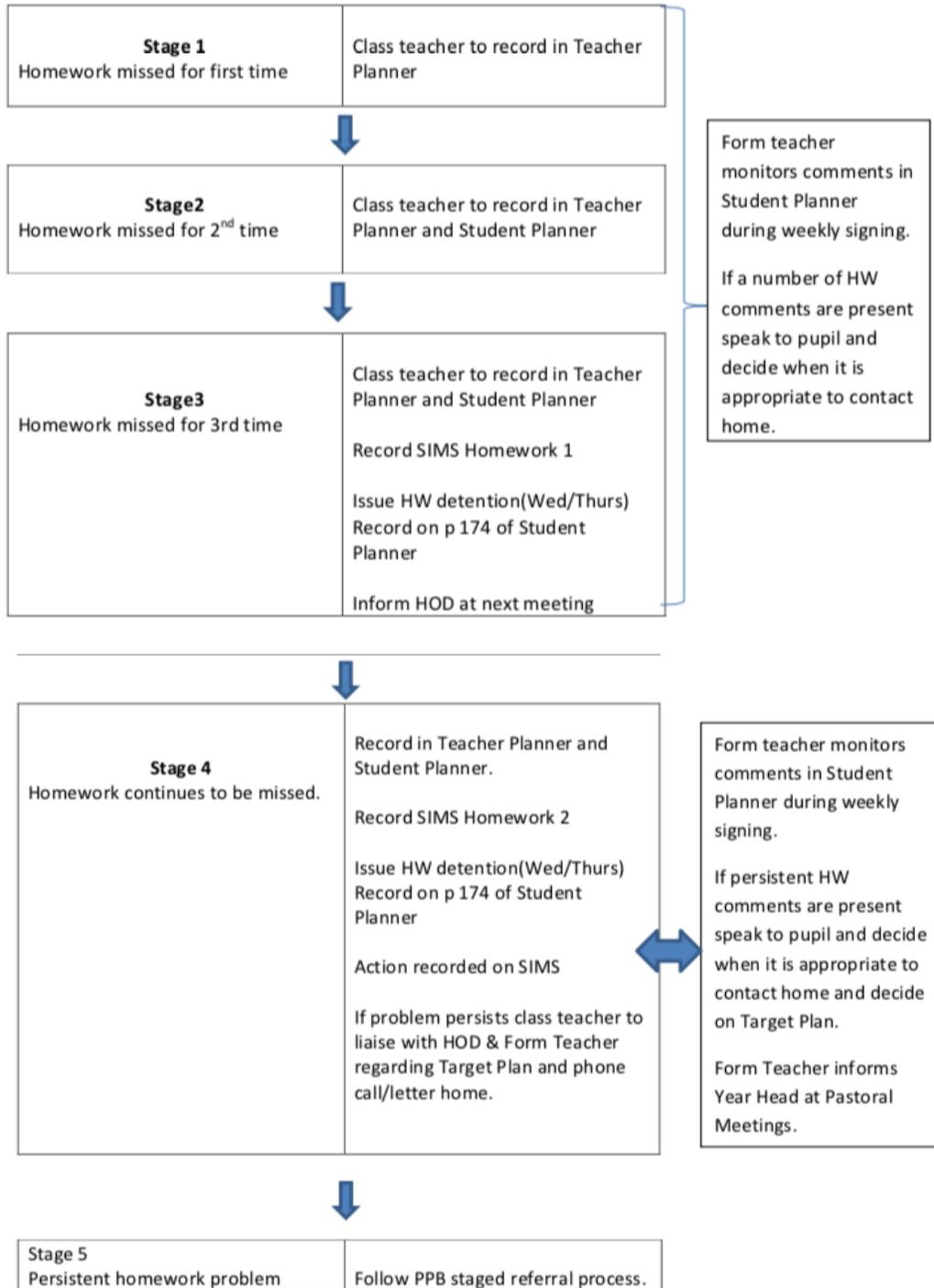
Knowing when controlled assessment or coursework is due and helping to make out a schedule to complete it on time.

Making sure your child is clear about what he/she is required to do. Locating internet sites that can help with his/her research.

Advising your child to save his/her computer work regularly. Encouraging your child to talk to his/her teacher about any problems. Making sure your child has the required books and resources.

***If you have concerns about homework, controlled assessment or coursework please contact your child's Form Teacher.***

## Appendix 2: Procedure for dealing with the non-completion of homework



Appendix 3

 <b>St Paul's High School Bessbrook</b>  <b>Daily Student Planner</b>				
<b>Student Name:</b>			<b>Class:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>				
<b>Period</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Date Due</b>	<b>Done</b> √
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
<b>Please copy this into your student planner this evening</b>				
<b>Parent/ Guardian Signature:</b>				

**Appendix 4**

**Form Teacher Letter**

Dear .....

In St Paul’s High School homework is widely recognised as a valuable way for pupils to reinforce the learning that has taken place in the classroom. It allows teachers to identify any difficulties pupils may have and to help them overcome these.

It is important that all homework tasks are completed to a satisfactory level and that they are handed in on time.

I wish to inform you that \_\_\_\_\_ has not returned homework in the following area(s) of learning: \_\_\_\_\_

I would appreciate if you would complete the slip below which indicates that you understand the present difficulties. It is important to note that appropriate action will follow if the situation does not improve.

**Yours sincerely**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Form Teacher** ..... Pupil

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Form Class: \_\_\_\_\_

I have discussed the importance of homework with \_\_\_\_\_ and I have ensured that he/she has now completed the homework(s).

Parent/Guardian signature: ..... Date: .....

Appendix 5

**Year Head Letter**

Dear .....

As you are aware we take the completion and return of homework very seriously in St. Paul's High School, and have previously written to you with our concerns regarding \_\_\_\_\_ lack of engagement with homework.

As there has been no significant improvement in this area, it is important that we meet to discuss this.

I would like to invite you to a meeting in school on \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

If this is not suitable please contact me to arrange another appointment.

**Yours sincerely \_\_\_\_\_ Year Head**