

Homework Policy



St John's College, Cardiff

HOMework POLICY

This policy applies to all sections of the School:

Sixth Form, Senior School, Junior School,
Infant School & Nursery.

Version: September 2024

Rationale

At St John's College, we seek to help our students achieve their academic potential. Homework is viewed as an important means of supporting student achievement and developing the routines of independent study.

Homework provides opportunities to:

- Reinforce, consolidate and extend work done in class;
- Prepare for forthcoming work in lessons;
- Practise key learning skills;
- Further challenge and extend students;
- Provide focus and support for students with ALN;
- Assist in the completion of coursework;
- Encourage pupils to read more widely;
- Access areas of study and make use of materials and resources, which are not available in the classroom, including, where appropriate, the use of Google Classroom;
- Develop skills of independent learning, including self-discipline, good study habits and time management;
- Support Assessment for Learning, so that students are able to recognise their achievements and identify ways to improve their learning;
- Involve parents and other adults as partners in education.

Homework is also used by teachers as a means of gathering feedback on student progress, in order to inform future planning.

Homework is set in all subjects according to the published Homework timetable (available annually on the Parent Portal). Students record homework during the lesson in their school diary. As a matter of good practice, whenever practicable, homework tasks are differentiated in order to meet the needs and abilities of students; to offer challenge to stretch individuals, but not be overbearing for those who find the subject more difficult.

Nursery & Infants

Parents are important partners in helping their children to learn and we ask that you spend quiet and purposeful time with your child reading and completing their homework activities. We strongly encourage all parents to read and share stories with their child every day and enjoy a bedtime story together.

Homework helps to reinforce the skills and topic work covered in class. It also establishes a routine and this makes life easier as children get older and need to study. Time spent on Nursery and Infant activities should also be fun and an opportunity for you to talk to your children about their day. Be positive, encourage and praise whenever possible. If your child is finding it difficult to complete their homework, please do let us know.

Every child will be given a red homework bag which is also used for communications from your child's teacher. Please check the bag each night, especially if your child attends After School Care.

In Nursery, homework and a bedtime reading book will be sent home once a week and pupils will start to receive pupil reading books when they are ready for this next step.

In the Infants, in addition to reading and spelling, your child may be asked to complete a numeracy or literacy based activity and activities could also be RE, Science, History or Geography based. The amount of homework is tailored to the child's age and in R7 it may take around 30 minutes to complete. Please use a writing pencil and coloured pencils to complete written work; felt pens are not allowed.

Juniors

In the Junior School we place a lot of emphasis on developing our pupils' reading skills. To facilitate this, all pupils should read daily at home. Most should read to an adult regularly. This reading should be noted in their reading record.

In addition, all Junior pupils should have two pieces of English homework and spellings; two pieces of Mathematics homework; one piece of Science, History and Geography homework per week. RE homework will be set ad hoc, as the scheme requires. The setting of homework is the responsibility of the subject teachers and should be appropriate to the current learning in the classroom. Homework tasks can be varied, but most will be based on embedding new skills and applying knowledge. Homework tasks may be differentiated.

Form tutors will prepare a homework timetable for pupils, checking with subject teachers, to ensure there is an even spread across the week. Homework should take around 30 minutes in lower Juniors and about an hour in upper Juniors.

Pupils should write their homework task neatly in their Homework Diaries, copying the task carefully from the board. Homework tasks can also be provided in a typed format if the instructions are more detailed. Younger pupils are provided with support in completing their diary entries.

If homework is not completed, the subject teacher will note this in the Homework Diary. If a pupil is unable to meet a deadline for personal reasons, we request a note from the parent to explain. Subject teachers will liaise with Form Tutors if there are repeated concerns about a pupil's homework. Form Tutors and the Head of Junior School will monitor the diaries to ensure regular homework is set according to the Homework Timetable.

To support your child with their homework, please provide a quiet space and time to complete their tasks. Encourage your child to read and follow instructions carefully. Pupils should try to complete the task independently, but you may check their homework and guide them to correct their mistakes. Please write in their diary if they have struggled to complete a task.

If a pupil stays for After-School Club, then it is expected that he/she will work quietly and effectively during homework time. It is not acceptable for a pupil to disturb other pupils or to disrupt homework. Staying at school for homework therefore has to be viewed as a privilege and the school reserves the right to suspend this privilege and, ultimately, to remove it if a pupil does not behave appropriately.

Although there are many benefits to a pupil if he/she stays for After-School Club, it is our experience that it is not always beneficial for a pupil to stay at school every evening of the week. If it is practical for parents to do so, we would encourage a balance during the week between staying at school for homework and going home to do homework.

Seniors

Responsibilities:

Subject teachers are responsible for:

- Setting homework according to the homework timetable;
- Assessing and providing formative feedback on homework;
- Providing opportunities for students to reflect on formative feedback, so that they have a clear idea on how to improve;
- Recording homework set and marks achieved;
- Following up on homework that has not been handed in, or that has been completed unsatisfactorily;
- Advising students, so that their time is managed effectively in order to allow deadlines to be met;
- Ensuring that the aims and learning outcomes of homework activities are clearly communicated to students;
- Liaison with the Form Tutor regarding students who are repeatedly not completing homework satisfactorily.

Heads of Department are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the department has an agreed policy on homework, which details how the School policy is implemented in each subject area;
- Monitoring teachers within the department to ensure that the implementation of homework is in accordance with departmental and school policy;
- Ensuring that homework activities are appropriately challenging, relevant and are consistently used by all teachers;
- Ensuring that homework activities are detailed in Schemes of Work;
- Supporting teachers within the department in achieving a satisfactory outcome with students for whom there are concerns relating to homework.

R12 & R13 Form Tutors are responsible for:

- Checking that students are recording homework in their student diary appropriately, and taking follow up action as necessary;
- Liaison with subject teachers (and parents) to facilitate a satisfactory outcome in cases where students are behind with homework or overburdened;
- Encouraging students to complete homework on the night that it is set wherever possible, irrespective of when it is due.

R14, R15 and R16 Form Tutors are responsible for:

- Liaison with subject teachers (and parents) to facilitate a satisfactory outcome in cases where students are behind with homework or overburdened;

- Encouraging students to complete homework on the night that it is set wherever possible. Where this is not possible, students should be encouraged to complete work in good time of a deadline.

Heads of Years are responsible for:

- Establishing the framework for the homework timetable;
- Publishing the homework timetable at the start of term.

The Director of Academic Studies is responsible for:

- Monitoring the implementation of the policy throughout the school.

Implementation:

1. Students and parents receive a copy of the homework timetable at the start of the academic year, in addition to the school's expectations relating to homework.
2. Homework must represent the student's own work (please see the school's Anti-Plagiarism Policy) and must be completed on time (please see the school's Rewards and Sanctions Policy for sanctions relating to late homework).

The amount of time spent completing homework each evening varies according to the age of the student; typically, homework of the duration outlined below is set. In some cases, there will be a different number of subjects setting homework on different days. This is to allow some flexibility in the timetable, in order to ensure that students have the opportunity to manage their time and meet deadlines.

Senior School

R12 and R13 Subject homework lasting 20 - 30 minutes are set. It is anticipated that virtually all of this work can be completed during supervised Homework Club after school (4pm-6pm). Students remaining in school for Homework Club are encouraged to have a reading book in case they complete their homework before the end of the session.

R14 Subject homework lasting approximately 30 minutes each are set. Students remaining in school for Homework Club should be able to complete this work before leaving, but they should also be encouraged to have a reading book available in case they finish before the end of the session.

R15 and R16 Students follow a flexible homework timetable, where subjects will set a pre-determined number of homework over the fortnightly period. The timing of the homework and associated deadlines is at the discretion of the teacher. This is to encourage independent learning and help students develop time management skills. Homework tasks are likely to be linked to GCSE coursework assignments and so will spread over a number of weeks in some cases.

L6 and U6 Sixth Form students are expected to spend at least 5 hours in Year 12 (when taking 4 subjects) and 6/7 hours in Year 13 (when taking 3 subjects) per subject each week of private study. This is likely to involve background reading, preparing additional notes, reviewing notes, completing coursework assignments and revision.

3. Students record homework in their student diary. For pupils in R12 and R13, the form tutors monitor the use of the diary and sign it each week. Parents are also asked to sign the diary each week.

4. Arrangements for Homework Club:

- All students may attend Homework Club which is a supervised, silent working session that runs from 4pm until 6pm in the school canteen;
- Students must sign in and out of Homework Club. Senior pupils may sign themselves out, but must leave the school premises via the main exit immediately for health and safety reasons;
- All students must be collected by a parent or guardian or make arrangements to walk/get the bus home by 6pm;
- Exemplary behaviour is expected at all times in Homework Club. The Homework Club behaviour policy is clearly displayed in the canteen for parents and pupils to read.

Guidelines on Homework Club

If a student stays for Homework Club, then it is expected that he/she will work quietly and effectively during homework time. It is not acceptable for a student to disturb other students or to disrupt homework. Staying at school for homework therefore has to be viewed as a privilege and the school reserves the right to suspend this privilege and, ultimately, to remove it if a student does not behave appropriately.

If a student is involved in an activity after school, then it will not be possible for him/her to attend Homework Club. In such cases, homework will need to be completed at home in the evening. We discourage students from completing homework at lunchtime because we believe they need a break in the middle of the busy school day.

Although there are many benefits to a student if he/she stays for Homework Club, it is our experience that it is not always beneficial for a student to stay at school every evening of the week. If it is practical for parents to do so, we would encourage a balance during the week between staying at school for homework and going home to do homework.