

# Bedford High School

A Specialist Business and Enterprise College  
To Care To Learn To Achieve



## Homework (Practice) Policy

<b>School Address</b>	Manchester Road Leigh WN7 2LU
<b>School Contact Number</b>	01942 909009

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Author/reviewer:	Gabriel Calwell
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### What the research says about homework.

- In general, **homework has substantial benefits at secondary school level**
- **A student's ability to complete homework may depend on factors that are outside their control** (Cooper et al., 2006; OECD, 2014; Eren & Henderson, 2011).
- **Short, task-orientated and frequent homework closely monitored by teachers** have more impact. (Hattie 2011)
- **Parental involvement** in the homework process is key. (Marzano and Pickering 2007)
- Homework should be made **meaningful and purposeful** (Marzano and Pickering 2007)

### What John Hattie's says about homework.

- Hattie's studies show that the effect size on learning outcomes at **Primary is  $d = 0.15$**  and for **Secondary students it is  $d = 0.64$**
- Hattie suggests that the reason for the difference between the  $d=0.15$  at primary level and  $d=0.64$  at secondary is that **younger students can't undertake unsupported study as well**; they can't filter out irrelevant information or avoid environmental distractions.
- **A bigger effect is seen when the outcome is more ephemeral.**
- The highest effects in secondary are associated with **rote learning, practice or rehearsal of subject matter**; **more task-orientated homework** has higher effects than deep learning and problem solving.
- **Effects are higher for higher ability students** than lower ability students.
- **Teacher monitoring** and involvement is key.

### **How homework compliments our vision for learning at Bedford.**

Our vision is to embed and sustain a learning culture where students reflect regularly on their learning in lessons, plan to build on that learning and practice (homework) their newly found knowledge and skills so that they are revisited and mastered. Learning at Bedford High School doesn't stop when the bell goes at the end of the school day. We manage our learning effectively and we work hard on becoming better learners so that we can master the broad curriculum we have to offer our students at Bedford High School. Both the school and parents work to support, strengthen, and stretch the students in our learning.

### **What homework means at Bedford.**

Regular, well planned homework can:

- Boost learning and ensure that students make maximum progress in their academic and social development.
- Ensure that our students accumulate the essential knowledge they need to make progress with our curriculum.
- Ensure that students can practice the learning independently.
- Develop good work habits and self-discipline for the future.
- Help parents gain insight into their child's schoolwork and promote partnership between home and school.
- Provide opportunities for students to close gaps in their learning.
- Consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and assist in preparation and planning for future class work.
- Provide an ongoing opportunity to build on literacy and numeracy beyond the classroom.

#### **When teachers set homework they will ensure that:**

- It is always relevant and promotes the mastery of recent learning and or recaps prior long-term learning.
- The task(s) is made clear to children so instructions are clear for all learners.
- All homework is assigned via Frog which can be accessed on the school website or on the MyFrog App. Teachers can also send support resources and work via email too. Teachers will sometimes request that work is submitted to them via email.
- Time scales for completion and submission are clear.
- Problems or difficulties encountered by children are dealt with swiftly. The problems can be picked up in detentions so that teachers can identify the gaps in learning.
- The impact of homework upon the standards of children's attainment is monitored and incorporated when reporting for screening.
- All children aspire to complete tasks to a high standard, and they will monitor this closely.

#### **When students are assigned homework they will ensure that:**

- They are clear about what they have to do and how they have to do it. They will use Frog to check the instructions and deadlines for completion. They should check with their class teacher if a homework task is not clear, and they can do this by emailing their teacher.
- They take time to put quality and effort into their homework.
- They take pride in their homework and present it to a very high standard.

- They prepare their homework in time for the deadline set by the teacher.
- They check Frog regularly to ensure that they have completed the HW set. For quicker access to the HW, students will benefit from downloading the 'MyFrog' App from the App Store.
- Read for at least 30mins per day. Parents can also read to their child and vice-versa. We want students to develop a natural love for reading.
- They are resourced with Knowledge Organisers (KO) which will often be an essential resource for Homework. These will be available both online (on Frog) and offline. Students will have a subject KO practice book too. This will be used for self-testing when learning the knowledge from the KO. Students should store all their KOs in their KO file.
- They use homework to close the gaps in their learning. The student can do this independently beyond the lessons and it does not always need the direction or motivation from the teacher but rather the student can successfully manage their own learning.

### **The Role of Parents is to:**

- Ensure that their child has somewhere quiet to work where there are no distractions.
- Ensure that they have the necessary equipment and resources.
- Encourage their child to take the time to complete homework to the best of their ability.
- Recognise, praise and celebrate the good work completed by their child.
- Recognise, praise and celebrate the productive learning habits that their child demonstrates.
- Encourage their child to have a thirst for and love of learning.
- Encourage their child to close the gaps in their learning.
- **Encourage their child to access online learning that makes a difference. Parents should oversee the use of Apps and the internet to ensure that their children are using technology and media to enhance their learning and not hinder it. Excessive time should not be wasted on sites or Apps that distract learning or add no value to learning. This includes gaming (consoles) and social media.**
- Encourage your child to attend the homework clubs and catch-up sessions in school.
- **Ensure that your child is doing independent reading for at least 30 minutes per evening** (all children should have a book from our library at all times). This will impact

very positively on learning and achievement in all subjects, especially if parents encourage their child to engage in a discussion around the literature the child is reading.

- Check Frog (VLE) everyday for details of homework. All teachers record homework via Frog and therefore this offers the most reliable tool for information on your child's homework. (Frog can be accessed from the school website where a login request and parental guidance can also be obtained).
- Parents will benefit from downloading the 'MYFROG' App from the APP Store so that they can have quicker access to the Homework.

### **Further guidance for parents in supporting the learning at home.**

Parents can make a huge difference to the learning outcomes of the students and all recent research underlines the positive impact this can make. We highly recommend to parents that they engage in dialogue regularly with their child regarding their learning and their homework.

To guide parents with this we would recommend the following questions are used to engage dialogue:

- *Can you tell me what you learnt in lesson(s) today?*
- *What was your best learning experience? Why?*
- *Why do you think it is important to learn this?*
- *What did you find difficult and what can you do to get better at this?*
- *How did you do in your last assessment(s)?*
- *Are you making good progress in this subject? How do you know?*
- *How are you closing the gaps in your learning?*
- *How are you revisiting and revising work from previous terms/years?*

It is vital that parents adopt a positive attitude to homework and value its importance. It is also important for parents to recognise that it is their child's responsibility to complete the work. However, parents might want to probe thinking and offer support with the learning especially by testing their child on the essential knowledge which is outlined in the Knowledge Organisers

### **Recognising and rewarding outstanding homework.**

1. Teachers are encouraged to model outstanding homework. In particular, teachers should recognise the time and effort that students put into their homework.

2. Teachers are likely to record any scoring or grading on homework. This might include, for example, the testing of learning homeworks against knowledge organisers or learning part of the text in a Shakespeare play. Students are encouraged to reflect on how well they have done in their homework and learn from mistakes.
3. Teachers should reward students who go above and beyond expectations by rewarding them on Class Charts.
4. Teachers should also award a 1 in the Screening reports for students who consistently do their homework to a high standard.

### **Intervention and support for incomplete or inadequate homework.**

1. Homework not completed or done to the expected standard will lead to intervention as decided by the teacher. The class teacher will log this via Class Charts.
2. The teacher might decide that a student will benefit from extra time after school to help the student close gaps in their learning. This additional tuition is an opportunity for students to gain extra support and intervention from the teacher. Students will be expected to attend this.
3. The number of accumulated 'failure to complete homework' sanctions will help to inform teachers when assigning a score for homework as part of the attitude to learning section of the screening reports. From the screening reports students who are identified as falling below expected homework standards will be targeted for homework improvements.
4. These targeted students may be put on a homework report which will be monitored by their Form Teacher, Pastoral Manager, Subject Leader or Senior Year Link.
5. Key online resources such as Doodle, My Maths, and Frog will often be used to close gaps as part of the intervention.
6. For further infringements and escalations please refer to the Behaviour policy.

### **Volume of Homework.**

Teachers will assign homework in line with their Curriculum Handbook policy. Where possible, and when appropriate, every lesson should trigger further work beyond the classroom. Students should always strive to consolidate the learning from the lesson and practise their newly found knowledge, skills and understanding so that it becomes embedded in their long term memory. In addition to homework assigned by the teacher, students should self-manage and self-direct so that they close their own

gaps in learning and become skilled at retaining knowledge through self-discipline, practice and self-testing.

Teachers should facilitate, support and coach in order for this student self-directed learning to be effective. To support this, teachers should:

- Ensure that students are clear about how they will close gaps in their learning.
- Ensure that students are clear about how they can best **practise** their learning.
- Ensure that students have the necessary resources for their practice.

***The table below shows the volume of HW assigned to students in each of the subjects at KS3 and 4.***

SUBJECT	KS3-volume of HW	KS4-volume of HW
ENGLISH	Students read for at least 20mins per day.  Students are set a further weekly task that will take 30mins-1 hour to complete.	All classes will have a set revision day. The class teacher will set and check revision tasks. Students will be expected to revise for approximately 2 hours per week.
MATHS	1x <b>Sparx</b> homework per week (algorithm automatically adjusts difficulty level and volume by student to give approximately 1 hour of work, 60% consolidation of current SOW learning, 40% retrieval practice).	1x <b>Sparx</b> homework per week, 1x half GCSE past paper homework per week.
SCIENCE	1 per week	1 per fortnight for each of the 3 Science subjects.
GEOGRAPHY	1 per week	1 per week
HISTORY	1 per week	2 per week

SPANISH	1 per week	KS4- One KO HW and one additional skill homework.
COMPUTER SCIENCE	1 per fortnight	1 per week
DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY	1 per fortnight	1 per week
MUSIC	KS3 - the department is open every lunchtime for students to come and practise what they are working on in class during the week.	1 per week
ART	1 per fortnight	1 per fortnight
PE/SPORT STUDIES	N/A	1 per week
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	1 per week (KO testing)	1 per week
RELIGIOUS STUDIES	1 per week	1 per week
FOOD/CATERING	1 per fortnight	1 per week
DRAMA	1 per week	1 per week
BUSINESS	1 per fortnight	1 per week
DANCE	N/A	1 per week  Practical- attend 1 hour extra-curricular session once per week.
MEDIA	N/A	1 per week

**Types of homework assigned by teacher.**



The teacher will use their professional judgement to determine the nature of the homework. However, the evidence listed at the start of this policy will be taken into consideration when assigning homework.

As default homework, all students will be expected to learn their subject **knowledge organisers**. (see appendix 1). This is something that should be an ongoing learning process that does not necessarily require direction from the teacher. Teachers will regularly test their learning of these in lessons to measure how well the students have mastered it. This will usually take place at the start of lessons. Teachers will want to see evidence of how students are learning against their knowledge organisers in their subject 'KO Practice books'. Students should learn their knowledge organiser and then test themselves to check if they have got it right. They should repeat this process until the knowledge has been accumulated and retained.

*Teachers will train our students on how to learn their Knowledge Organisers most effectively.*

Teachers might also use '**Doddle**' and other subject specific online resources for assigning homework. These are often very important online tools which support the subject curriculum.

### **Students with special educational needs**

We set homework for all students so that all students can achieve their best. It is essential that all children complete this homework so that they can make expected progress. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate and relevant. If a child has specific needs, we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. Further support and resources are offered daily in our homework clubs.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the governing body to agree and then monitor the school homework policy. The governing body may, at any time, request from the head teacher a report on the way homework is organised in the school.

Homework checks will be done termly. They will also be done during the Subject Learning review process and as part of work scrutiny. Analytics on Frog will be used as the starting point for these checks. The following will be analysed:

- The regularity and quality of homework being assigned to students and year groups.
- The regularity and quality of homework being assigned by teachers and departments.

### **Appendices.**

## **Appendix 1: Knowledge Organisers.**

### **What are they?**

Knowledge organisers are a checklist of all the key learning for a term of work in a subject. This checklist helps to make the essential learning more concise and helps students to master key knowledge and understanding.

### **Will I have one for every subject?**

All students will have subject knowledge organisers for each of their subjects. Knowledge organisers will cover one unit of work which is typically a term's worth of work.

### **How will they be used?**

As default homework, all students will be expected to learn their subject knowledge organisers. This is something that should be an ongoing learning process that does not necessarily require direction from the teacher. However, teachers will most likely make this more manageable and assign students to learn them in realistic chunks. Teachers will regularly test the learning of these in lessons to measure how well the students have mastered it. This will usually take place at the start of lessons.

### **Where will they be and how will they be cared for?**

The Knowledge Organisers must be extremely well looked after. Firstly, all students will be given A4 files for the storage of all Knowledge Organisers. All Knowledge Organisers will be stored in the same file and this file must be in a student's possession at all times. The file will need to go home each day after school to support the homework but students must return to school with the knowledge organisers the following day. All subject Knowledge Organisers can be located on Frog including the 'MyFrog' App.

### **How will teachers know if I have been learning my knowledge organisers?**

Teachers will want to see evidence of how students are learning against their knowledge organisers in their subject knowledge organisers files. Teachers can test students at any time on their subject knowledge and most of this testing will take place at the start of lessons. Students are encouraged to use mind- maps, repetitious notes, acronyms, flashcards, self-quizzing etc. to help them to master the learning.