

TCS Homework Policy

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Contents

1. Rationale	2
2. The purposes of homework	2
3. Principles underlying homework policy and practice	2
4. Types of homework	2
5. Frequency and duration of homework tasks	3
6. Homework timetable	3
7. Setting and recording homework	3
8. Students failing to complete homework	4
9. Reviewing the provision of homework	4
Appendix: Survey responses Feb 2019	5
Appendix: EFF Toolkit information	7

1. Rationale

This policy is designed to provide a framework from which departments can develop their own effective approach to homework taking into consideration students of all ages and levels of ability.

At TCS we believe that homework is important in:

- reinforcing positive attitudes to school work;
- encouraging and developing self-organisation and self-discipline;
- reinforcing, broadening and extending the school curriculum;
- developing the home/school partnership;
- preparing students for examinations;
- preparing students for life opportunities and experiences.

2. The purposes of homework

There are many reasons for setting homework, the most important ones being to:

- encourage and develop self-discipline and study habits;
- reinforce class work and consolidate learning;
- provide opportunities for teachers to assess students' progress and to maintain a dialogue with the student about their learning;
- give students experience of working on their own, and to develop in students a sense of responsibility for, and commitment to, their own learning;
- involve parents in the educational process and provide an insight into the work of the student.

3. Principles underlying homework policy and practice

- Homework should be carefully planned and be an integral part of learning.
- Students should be adequately prepared for the completion of tasks set.
- Homework should be issued to every year group, and to all students.
- Homework should be issued in appropriate quantities and completion dates should be both clear and reasonable.
- There should be a clear rationale for the task, linked to the learning in the subject.

4. Types of homework

Homework tasks should be set to reflect ongoing class work across the curriculum. The list below is not exhaustive.

Homework can take the form of:

- Further examples of tasks undertaken in class, designed to reinforce what has been learned;
- Completing work begun in class;
- Pre-learning work that will be covered in the next lessons (this is sometimes called 'flipped learning', and is often appropriate at the beginning of new topics);
- Reviewing, and, if appropriate, memorising key information learned in class;
- Follow-up work to assessment, ensuring that the student learns from errors;
- Researching at home or in libraries using a variety of sources including ICT
- Revising and preparing for tests or examinations (it is important that teachers monitor the revision has taken place)

5. Frequency and duration of homework tasks

Homework should be set regularly, and in the majority of departments this will be weekly or fortnightly. A week should be given for students to complete homework tasks, unless they are very short tasks. At KS3 students should spend around 30 minutes on homework in subjects. This should increase to 1 hour at KS4.

6. Homework timetable

The school does not publish a prescriptive homework timetable. Teachers are expected to adhere to the arrangements described above, and to set homework with a reasonable deadline for completion (around a week is normal; it is not usually expected that students would have to hand in homework the next day, for example). Students are expected to develop their organisational skills by planning the completion of their homework tasks.

7. Setting and recording homework

Teachers will set homework through the online resource Teams and notify students in class, and they may also email students.

Teachers will upload the details of the homework including due date and other instructions into the Class on Teams. The teacher will inform the class that homework has been set and that the details are on Teams. The teacher may also attach other resources that may be required such as supplementary worksheets, links to website or videos etc.

Each student has a personal log in for Teams that is linked to their School Email.

Parents and carers are encouraged to support their child's organisation and completion of homework, but to allow students to manage their homework themselves.

Students that do not have access to the internet at home can use computers around the school, for example at lunchtime in departments.

Students who cannot print at home can complete work and upload it into Teams, or print in school.

8. Students failing to complete homework

Teachers will set sanctions for homework that is not completed. Excuses such as being absent or unable to log in to Teams are not reasonable if there has been sufficient time to remedy these issues.

If your child is unable to meet a homework deadline they should speak to the teacher directly.

9. Reviewing the provision of homework

TCS will regularly review the provision of homework using surveys for students and parents. These reviews will help form any changes to the school policy.

Appendix: Survey responses Feb 2019

Student Responses Summary

214 students out of 865 responded (24.7% response rate)

Year Group	Number of responses	% of Year group
7	32	16.9
8	65	35.3
9	35	19.9
10	45	29.0
11	37	23.0

Do you think the amount of Homework you get is:

	7	8	9	10	11	Grand Total
About right	23	29	19	13	17	101
Not enough	2	1	3	2	2	10
Too much	7	35	13	30	18	103
Grand Total	32	65	35	45	37	214

	7	8	9	10	11
I don't really understand the relevance of the homework I receive	5	22	18	21	11
I regularly get homework I can't complete as I don't understand	5	17	8	18	7
I don't get the right type of homework	5	8	6	14	2
The homework I get helps me to learn new knowledge	8	18	7	8	8
The homework I get helps me to practise new skills	14	24	6	12	19
The homework I get teaches me how to research topics for myself	9	20	7	10	9

Parent Responses Summary

329 responses received

nb - can't do % for parents as more than one parent may have replied for the same child(ren)

Year Group	Number of responses
7	93
8	85
9	66
10	52
11	33

Do you think the amount of Homework your child gets is:

	7	8	9	10	11	Grand Total	
About right	61	55	33	31	17	197	60% of respondents
Not enough	16	20	27	16	9	88	27% of respondents
Too much	16	10	6	5	7	44	13% of respondents
Grand Total	93	85	66	52	33	329	

Type of Homework - more than 1 answer allowed

	7	8	9	10	11	
I don't really understand the relevance of the homework they receive	12	17	6	10	3	14.6% of respondents
They regularly get homework they can't complete as they don't understand	22	13	11	8	11	19.8% of respondents
They don't get the right type of homework	5	8	5	4	3	7.6% of respondents
The homework they get helps them to learn new knowledge	27	21	20	17	11	29% of respondents
The homework they get helps them to practise new skills	42	38	28	24	14	44% of respondents
The homework they get teaches them how to research topics for themselves	49	44	37	22	15	51% of respondents

Appendix: EFF Toolkit information

How effective is homework?

On average, the impact of homework on learning is consistently positive (leading to on average five months' additional progress). However, beneath this average there is a wide variation in potential impact, suggesting that **how homework is set** is likely to be very important.

There is some evidence that homework is **most effective** when used as a **short and focused intervention** (e.g. in the form of a project or specific target connected with a particular element of learning) with some exceptional studies showing up to eight months' positive impact on attainment. Benefits are likely to be more modest, up to two to three months' progress on average, if homework is more routinely set (e.g. learning vocabulary or completing problem sheets in mathematics every day).

Evidence also suggests that how homework relates to learning during normal school time is important. **In the most effective examples homework was an integral part of learning, rather than an add-on.** To maximise impact, it also appears to be important that students are provided with **high quality feedback on their work.** Studies imply that there is an optimum amount of homework of between **1 and 2 hours per school day (slightly longer for older pupils)**, with effects diminishing as the time that students spend on homework increases.

How secure is the evidence?

Homework has been extensively studied. However, studies have mainly looked at the correlation between homework and how well schools perform. It is certainly the case that schools whose pupils do homework tend to perform well, but it is less clear that the homework is the reason why they are successful.

There are a smaller number of studies which have investigated what happens when homework is introduced and compared with classes where homework is not given. These studies tend to show that homework is beneficial, though the evidence is less secure.

Key points:

1. Planned and focused activities are more beneficial than homework which is more regular but may be routine or not linked with what is being learned in class.
2. It should not be used as a punishment or penalty for poor performance.
3. A variety of tasks with different levels of challenge is likely to be beneficial.
4. The quality of homework is more important than the quantity. Pupils should receive specific and timely feedback on homework.
5. Have you made the purpose of homework clear to children (e.g. to increase a specific area of knowledge, or fluency in a particular area)?