



PARMITER'S SCHOOL

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Teaching and Learning is the core purpose of Parmiter's School and this is made explicit in the School Development Plan. We believe that all students, whatever their ability, should receive high quality teaching throughout the curriculum so that they are able to achieve their potential.

This suite of policy documents exists to outline the school's commitment to continually raising the quality of teaching and learning. It comprises 4 parts:

1. Teaching and Learning – General Principles
2. Assessment, Recording and Reporting
3. Homework
4. Stretch and Challenge

1. TEACHING AND LEARNING – GENERAL PRINCIPLES

In order for Teaching and Learning to be engaging and effective, a range of teaching methods, styles and strategies must be used. We highly value the knowledge, skill and professionalism of our staff and trust them to determine the best approaches in their subject areas.

All teaching staff are expected to:

- Maintain and continue to develop their subject content and pedagogical knowledge through a commitment to Professional Development.
- Plan lessons that follow schemes of work and are sequenced towards cumulative knowledge. Where appropriate, lessons are linked to the relevant examination syllabus.
- Communicate to students intended learning outcomes and how new knowledge integrates into larger concepts and programmes of study.
- Set homework tasks that are meaningful and are designed to consolidate and extend students' understanding, knowledge and skills.
- Use a variety of assessment techniques to check students' understanding systematically, identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback.
- Ensure that the pace and challenge meets the needs of all students and approaches and tasks are differentiated when necessary.
- Foster positive working relationships, rooted in mutual respect, that model and promote excellent behaviour and allow students to focus on learning.
- Promote the importance of literacy and numeracy in all areas of the curriculum.

Teaching staff are NOT expected to:

- Produce written lesson plans or follow a prescribed format for lesson planning and delivery.
- Teach differently during lesson observations.
- Visually display learning objectives.

All Parmiter's students are expected to:

- Be responsible and organised, arriving on time to lessons with the correct equipment.
- Listen attentively and respectfully to everyone in the classroom.
- Make mistakes and embrace them as part of the learning process.
- Take an active role in, and responsibility for, their own learning.
- Use digital technologies responsibly.
- Seek positive working relationships with teaching staff.

Monitoring of Teaching and Learning:

Teaching and Learning will be monitored through:

- The appraisal process for teaching staff – please see separate policy.
- The Evaluation, Review and Priorities process undertaken by curriculum Middle Leaders and the Senior Leadership Team.
- Analysis of the data provided through the Assessment, Reporting and Recording cycle outlined below.
- Outcome of assessments within subject areas and information recorded on departmental tracking documents.
- Formal and informal monitoring by Heads of Department and other relevant post holders (i.e. colleagues holding a TLR related to curriculum). This may include, but will not be limited to:
 - work scrutiny,
 - learning walks and open door policies within department areas,
 - departmental discussions on best practice,
 - sharing of resources,
 - feedback from students and parents.

2. ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

Over recent years, there have been extensive changes to national qualifications at GCSE and GCE level. Consequently, our curriculum is adapting so that students in Years 7 to 9 develop a strong foundation for future study and students in Years 10 to 13 develop the skills and knowledge for success in external examinations. Our assessment policy will therefore develop, in line with these requirements, over the next few years.

Principles of assessment

As we develop our assessment system, we aim to adhere to the principles that we believe underpin effective assessment.

- Assessment is at the heart of teaching and learning.
It must provide evidence to guide teaching and learning. This requires that assessment is fit for purpose for the learner and the curriculum area. This will require a range of assessment practice.
- Assessment is ambitious but inclusive of all abilities.
We expect assessment objectives to set high expectations for our students but recognise that a student can only demonstrate their skills and knowledge if the assessment is accessible.
- Assessment is fair and consistent.
Assessment should draw on a wide range of evidence to provide a complete picture of student achievement. Assessment judgements are moderated internally, and where appropriate externally, to ensure their accuracy.
- Assessment outcomes provide meaningful and understandable information for:
 - Students in developing their learning.
 - Teachers in planning teaching and learning. Assessment must provide information that justifies the time spent.
 - Parents in supporting their children with their learning.
 - Middle Leaders and those with curriculum and/or pastoral responsibilities, Senior Leaders and Governors so progress at an individual and/or group level can be tracked against expectations.

In developing our assessment system, we will review and amend each stage of the process: target setting, assessment (including moderation), tracking, monitoring (at individual and groups level), intervention and impact.

Assessment practice

The key purpose of assessment is to promote learning, develop potential and enable students to demonstrate their progress and achievement. Assessment and feedback are key to the learning and teaching process; they should take place regularly and be both formative and summative. It should inform the next steps in learning by identifying strengths and weaknesses and help a student engage more fully in their own development and learning.

A wide spectrum of formal and informal assessment methods is used as part of the learning process. A variety of practice is both necessary and inevitable due to the nature of individual subjects and the needs of students at different key stages.

Formative Assessment, or Assessment for Learning, takes place during the learning process and is based on day to day classroom practice. These opportunities for students to receive immediate feedback are invaluable and may include:

- verbal feedback from the teacher;
- question and answer opportunities;
- mini-plenaries that review and identify learning during and at the end of lessons;
- peer- and self- assessment.

As there may be no formal record of this feedback, students are encouraged to identify and record targets or areas for improvement from this feedback. Formative assessment allows teachers to respond to the needs of class, adapting the lesson to ensure progress.

The nature and detail of teacher marking varies according to the task. It is not expected that a teacher will mark every piece of work completed by students. However, both class work and homework should be marked regularly in order to provide students with feedback and facilitate progress. In many cases, peer and self-marking may be more appropriate to the task in question or a teacher may acknowledge-mark, that is marking that recognises that work has been completed in accordance with the teacher's expectations.

More detailed teacher marking will occur for identified assessed tasks, class work or homework tasks. Feedback will provide constructive advice on student successes and a subject-focused target to help students know what they need to do to improve and take the next step in their learning.

Summative assessment, measuring a student's achievement at a particular point in time, may include topic/end of unit tests, a project or an assessed task, a specifically identified class work or homework task. These will take place periodically according to department guidelines. Students in each year group experience formal school examinations.

Individual departments set guidelines for the frequency of marking within their own assessment policies, taking account of the year group in question and the frequency of lessons in their subject. Each department publishes assessment guidance for students & parents on the school website. Further detail may be provided to students by their subject teacher.

Assessment criteria

In Years 12 & 13 students are assessed against nationally recognised outcomes based on examination board's description of what skills and/or knowledge are required to attain certain A Level grades. From September 2017, the Year 12 curriculum has included only subjects teaching the new linear specifications. Students studying a 'linear' course are assessed against the outcomes for the A Level qualification (as students at Parmiter's do not sit AS examinations).

In Years 10 & 11 students are assessed against nationally recognised outcomes based on examination board's description of what skills and/or knowledge are required to attain certain GCSE grades. From September 2018, all KS4 students are assessed against the criteria in the GCSE specifications with attainment being reported against the new grading system (grades 9 to 1, with 9 being the highest; U grades can also be awarded).

From September 2016, students joining the school in Year 7 were no longer awarded levels at Key Stage 2. These have been replaced with standardised scores and age related expectation information.

In light of these changes, Key Stage 3 students will have their attainment assessed against the Parmiter's Scale Descriptors. These descriptors, which are outlined in the publically available 'Parmiter's Scale Descriptors', are unique to Parmiter's. They have been written to reflect our curriculum and our expectations of students in KS3. They draw upon the Key Stage 2 curriculum, the more beneficial aspects of the former National Curriculum Levels, GCSE assessment guidance and our experience of Year 7 & 8 students.

In Year 7, this attainment scale will run from 1 to 10 with the scale increasing to 15 in Year 8 and 20 in Year 9. Additionally, should any student consistently exceed their teachers' expectations they can be awarded an E (exceptional performance). Efforts have been made to standardise these scores across departments for ease of comparison.

In line with our school aims, we aim to recognise the pursuit of excellence. We understand that academic achievement and progress are not necessarily directly related to attitude and effort. Attitude to Learning (AtL) grades may be awarded for individual pieces of work, or a sequence of work, in some curriculum areas depending on departmental practice. The description of AtL grades awarded is included as appendix 1.

Recording and reporting

Subject teachers are responsible for recording assessment data as detailed in their department guidelines. Data will be made available to parents on request. Data is collected centrally, via SIMS, three times per students, per year.

Parents are encouraged to engage with their son/daughter's achievements and their targets by regularly looking at their exercise books, portfolios and other work. Parents will receive information more formally via Parents' Evenings, gradesheets and reports. Parents and students are expected to attend one Parents' Evening in each academic year. For each year group, in addition to Parents' Evenings, parents will receive formal feedback at least twice during the academic year.

In Key Stage 3, parents will receive two gradesheets in each academic year. These gradesheets include information on current progress, attainment and AtL in each subject. In addition to this, Year 7 parents will receive an AtL summary midway through the first term.

In Key Stage 4, during Year 10, an AtL summary and two gradesheets will be sent home. Parents of Year 11 students will receive a written report and Trial Examination feedback.

During the two-year Key Stage 5, parents will receive one report, which includes a written subject commentary, and five gradesheets. These will vary in content depending on their timing.

Parents are welcome to contact their son/daughter's Head of Year or their subject teacher if they have concerns about their progress or AtL at any point during the year.

3. HOMEWORK

What is "homework"?

"Homework" is any work or activity which students are asked to do outside lesson time, either on their own or with parents or carers. It is an essential part of the learning process and we place a strong emphasis on it at Parmiter's School. Staff are required to set and assess appropriate homework on a regular basis. All students across the age and ability range are expected to complete homework tasks. Parents/carers are encouraged to take an active role in the process.

Principles

We believe that homework plays an important part in students' learning because:

- it encourages them to develop the skills, confidence and motivation to study effectively on their own; this is vital given the importance of lifelong learning and adaptability.
- it encourages good time management;
- it allows practice of skills learned in the classroom;
- it extends school learning, permitting more rapid progress to be made in school;
- it may make use of outside interests and resources;
- it may involve parents/carers and other adults in their work, improving home/school and community/school links.

Guidelines to staff

Homework should be:

- of quality rather than quantity;
- integrated into the departmental scheme of work where possible;
- set regularly according to the school's agreed timetable with reasonable deadlines;
- followed up if not completed;
- set for students with long-term absence (until other agencies become involved) or who are excluded.

Homework tasks should:

- be varied and meaningful, and not regularly used simply for "finishing off" work begun in class;
- be differentiated, where necessary, so that they are achievable by all students;
- be set well in advance of the end of lessons to ensure that there is sufficient time for clear explanation;
- be published on Show My Homework (SMHW) before 3.45pm on the day it is set;
- positively encourage the support of parents/carers and others with whom students have contact outside school;
- be appropriately assessed, in line with departmental assessment policies, and returned to students within a reasonable timescale.

Homework tasks could include:

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|---|-------------------------|
| • Investigations | • Listening |
| • Interviews | • Report writing |
| • Essay writing | • Simple experiments |
| • Research | • Practising a skill |
| • Practical work | • Attending a club |
| • Reading | • Use of ICT |
| • Drafting | • Projects |
| • Drawing | • Memorising |
| • Making a short film/animation | • Calculations/Numeracy |
| • Problem solving | • Designing/Making |
| • Watching clips | • Revision |
| • Reviewing television/radio programmes | |

Frequency

In Years 7-11 the pattern of homework is set by a homework timetable which accommodates, as far as possible, the needs of all subjects, prevents too much or too little homework being set and allows students to predict their future workload and plan for it. Staff should use the guidelines below regarding the recommended length of homework and record on SMHW how long a piece of work ought to take. It is recognised that actual completion times will vary by student and by subject.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9)

Homework is set according to the published timetable. It is recommended that students should be spending about 30 – 45 minutes per subject. Staff will determine the handing in dates. Year 7 students will be set shorter homework tasks during the first two weeks of the Autumn Term in order to give them more time to adjust to their new routine and environment.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11)

Each subject will set in the region of 45 – 90 minutes per week, as appropriate. Staff have increasing flexibility to negotiate handing in dates with their classes. However, the possible choices are determined by the homework timetable to guard against too much or too little being set. Preparation for GCSE controlled assessments/coursework should be integrated into the homework pattern as far as possible. Year 11 students will generally have revision homework in the two weeks prior to the December trial examinations.

Key Stage 5 (Years 12 and 13)

In the Sixth Form students are expected to engage in out-of-lessons work that goes far beyond what is actually set for homework. In many cases, the grade achieved at A level will depend on how much reading around the subject, extra work or research a student undertakes during a course. There are no limits to this kind of work, although a sensible balance needs to be maintained.

Teaching staff should limit set homework tasks to a maximum of 5 hours per subject per week – in most cases, this equates to one hour per taught lesson. The vast majority of students study 3 A Levels and average 3 lessons per day. With homework, this becomes equivalent to 6 hours of academic study per week day – this is less than KS4 students are expected to complete and allows time to engage in the out-of-lesson work detailed above.

Monitoring

Completion of homework is checked in the first instance by the subject teacher and non-completion is followed up. Form Tutors may check with students that homework is being set according to the published timetable. Any concerns must be referred to the Head of Department and/or Head of Year as appropriate. The setting of homework, its quality and its assessment are monitored by the Head of Department as part of the school's monitoring and evaluation process. Heads of Year monitor the amount set for individual students. SLT have oversight of the process and ensure that the policy is being applied consistently.

Non-Examined Assessment

Further details are outlined in the school's policy for Non-Examined Assessment.

Guidelines to students (See Student Information Sheet – appendix 2)

Students are expected to take responsibility for their homework by:

- checking SMHW daily;
- asking the teacher to explain instructions again where necessary;
- completing the set tasks and seeking help if they are having difficulty;
- keeping to deadlines.

Guidelines to parents/carers (See Parent/Carer Information Sheet – appendix 3)

Parents/carers are asked to:

- take an interest in their child's work and check SMHW regularly;
- offer praise when their child achieves significant success;
- give as much encouragement as possible;
- inform the teacher, via the pocket planner, email or written note, if there is a genuine reason for homework not done;
- contact the Head of Year if they have concerns about the frequency/quality of homework.

4. STRETCH AND CHALLENGE POLICY

Parmiter's school is a happy and successful school with a deserved reputation for academic excellence. We aim to provide a well-disciplined and supportive environment within which individuals can achieve their full potential. We look to provide effective learning opportunities across the curriculum for all students to ensure that they are appropriately 'stretched' and 'challenged' through the work set and the teaching methods employed.

All teaching and support staff share responsibility for delivering a rigorous and academically challenging curriculum to all students in their care, regardless of their current level of attainment in the subject. We believe that facilitating 'stretch and challenge' should not be a 'bolt on' provision, but an integral part of effective teaching and learning within lessons. The terminology denotes the central importance of all students being 'stretched' to ensure that they achieve the highest possible standards in their learning and the concept of 'challenge' requires them to step out of their 'comfort zone' and push themselves, whilst still working within a collaborative and supportive environment.

Aims and Objectives:

1. To establish an aspirational culture, where students are encouraged and supported to maximise their potential and to take responsibility for their own success.
2. To ensure that all students are 'stretched' within lessons through personalised and differentiated learning (not just those who are deemed to be the most academically able in a given subject).
3. To develop and sustain an ethos that promotes achievement throughout the school.
4. To encourage a culture whereby students feel empowered to take risks, approach things with independence and develop the resilience to approach more challenging work in a positive and pro-active fashion.

Classroom Strategies to Facilitate Stretch and Challenge:

In order to meet the needs of all students and ensure that 'stretch and challenge' is evident across all levels within the school, we aim to employ the following practices and strategies within the classroom, as appropriate:

- Schemes of work should have precisely differentiated assessment objectives, so that it is clear what is expected of students at all levels and how students can progress to the next level in their work.
- Assessment opportunities (including peer and self-assessment) that match these objectives and assessments should provide opportunities for students to engage directly with success criteria and to review their own progress, through a process of target setting.
- Schemes of work should allow for differentiation within a group by pace, outcome, task, resources, support and dialogue and should be accompanied by appropriate resources.
- Schemes of work in Year 7, wherever possible, should take in to account and build upon prior learning (depending on the precise nature of the subject).
- Extension activities should not be 'more of the same' but should offer real opportunities to stretch and challenge more able students.
- A variety of teaching and learning styles should be utilised that cater for the needs of more able students and provide a suitable level of challenge. This may include testing higher order thinking skills and providing the opportunity for students to speculate and solve problems using recognised strategies such as Bloom's Taxonomy (to appropriately target questioning) or De Bono's thinking hats (to encourage students to approach their learning in different ways).

- Where appropriate, lessons should include an element of independent learning, to ensure that students develop resilience in their approach to their work and the ability to accept that being initially less successful at more challenging tasks provides opportunities for them to further their learning and does not constitute failure.
- Students should be given opportunities, wherever possible, to take an active role in leading their own learning, such as assisting with the delivery of starters and plenaries, leading presentations or playing an active role in developing questioning within the lesson.

Stretch and Challenge Beyond the Classroom:

In addition to the methods used within the classroom to ‘stretch and challenge’ students, a variety of extra-curricular provision is offered within the school. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Opportunities to attend external enrichment activities and master-classes (such as Villiers Park at Key Stage 5 or university taster days).
- Subject-specific clubs that help to foster a passion for an aspect of a subject.
- Visiting speakers, subject workshops and theatre trips.
- Student participation in a range of University-run subject specific competitions.
- Student involvement in STEM.
- Completion of an EPQ to encourage independent thinking and the pursuit of a topic that is of personal interest to a student.
- Involvement in summer school activities to further enrich the classroom learning experience.
- Being immersed in the language, culture and history of another country (through the MFL trips and the trip to the Battlefields that run in summer term).
- Attending a variety of places of worship and having the opportunity to use existing research and lessons to reflect upon these experiences.
- Supporting younger students by taking on the role of a Sports Leader, a Prefect or assisting with the school’s Literacy and Numeracy support programme.
- Participating in School Congress, to give feedback on whole school issues and contribute to the ongoing development of the school.
- Participating in relevant work experience programmes.
- Opportunities to complete the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.

Monitoring and Reporting on Stretch and Challenge:

- Evidence of students being appropriately stretched in lessons and challenged to move out of their comfort zone will be provided primarily in the form of lesson observations (as part of the appraisal process) as this will be explicit in the teaching methods used.
- Furthermore, evidence will be provided in the form of tracking data from formative and summative assessment.
- Students will also be supported and encouraged to set challenging targets for themselves as part of their self-assessment of their work. Through this, they will become more confident at applying the success criteria for a task in a meaningful way that will enable them to stretch themselves to achieve beyond their own expectations.
- Departments will offer a range of extra-curricular opportunities to enable students to immerse themselves in a subject beyond their classroom experience.
- Documents and notes created as part of the Evaluation, Review and Priorities (departmental review) process will also refer to explicitly and implicitly to stretch and challenge.
- Formal and informal monitoring by Heads of Department will include (but not be limited to) work scrutiny, learning walks, departmental discussion on best practice, sharing of resources and feedback from students.

Appendix 1 - AtL GRADES

The AtL grade that most appropriately describes the student should be awarded. Staff are asked to ensure that these grades are awarded in line with attitude and **not achievement**.

Attitude to Learning: Learner Characteristics

5. Highly Motivated Learner	4. Engaged Learner	3. Passive Learner	2. Reluctant Learner	1. Disengaged Learner
Starts learning readily, demonstrating intellectual curiosity and excellent focus at all times	Approaches learning with active interest and sustains strong focus	Follows instructions and listens to teacher; generally maintains focus throughout	Requires prompting to ensure tasks are attempted and is not always focused	Normally needs repeated prompting to attempt tasks and shows little focus; does not listen to instructions
Seeks challenge and perseveres; asks questions to extend thinking	Responds positively to challenging activities	Sometimes avoids more challenging activities	Limited effort with basic activities	Basic activities often incomplete or inadequate
Actively participates in all elements of learning	Frequently answers questions and participates well in discussion	Some participation in class discussion/activities	Reluctant to engage with class activities unless directly prompted	Rarely engages with class discussion
Seeks own solutions to problems before asking for help	Seeks help when needed	Sometimes seeks assistance from staff	Reluctant to seek help	Very reluctant to seek help
Invites feedback and responds positively to praise and criticism alike	Learns from setbacks and mistakes; takes pride in their work	Usually attempts to act on feedback; generally completes all work set to an acceptable standard	Rarely takes action based on feedback; takes little pride in outcomes	Does not attempt to act on advice and responds negatively to feedback; takes no pride in work
Reviews own progress; effective independent learner	Highly-motivated to learn; works well independently	Generally a diligent and independent learner	Can show ability to work independently but requires supervision	Demonstrates very little ability to work independently
Organises time and equipment effectively, including homework	Organises time and equipment well, including homework	Usually manages time and equipment to a satisfactory standard, including homework	Misses some homework deadlines and does not always have correct equipment	Misses most homework deadlines and rarely has correct equipment
Exceptional behaviour at all times; sets an example to peers	Good behaviour at all times; works well with peers	Well-behaved but often passive; can be distracted by peers	May distract others; may be off task; can be easily distracted	Disrupts the classroom environment; distracts peers

Appendix 2 – HOMEWORK ADVICE FOR STUDENTS

What is “homework”?

“Homework” is any work or activity which you are asked to do outside lesson time, either on your own or with your parents/carers. It is an essential part of the learning process and we place a strong emphasis on it at Parmiter’s. Your teachers are required to set and assess appropriate homework on a regular basis. All students across the age and ability range are expected to complete homework tasks and your parents are encouraged to take an active role in the process.

Why do you get homework?

The main reasons are:

- you learn how to plan and organise your work;
- it helps you learn how to work on your own, and to think and try things out for yourself;
- it helps you learn how to use time effectively and to meet deadlines;
- it gives you the chance to practise what you have done in class, or to do some background work that will help you understand what’s coming next;
- it encourages you to use resources that can be found outside school;
- it involves people outside school in your work: parents and others can work with the school and help you make progress in your learning;
- if it is done properly, you will learn more.

Homework is generally set in line with the published homework timetable. If you have not been set homework for some reason (e.g. the teacher was away), this does not mean that there is no work to do. You must take responsibility for your own learning and progress by ensuring that all your work is up-to-date, by catching up on work missed due to absence or by consolidating your knowledge and skills through use of text books, internet resources or the VLE.

Here are some ideas to help you do your homework successfully:

Before you do your homework:

- Make sure you know what you are meant to be doing and why you are doing it.
- Check SMHW daily and read instructions carefully.
- If you think you are going to struggle to do the work set, talk to your teacher about it or ask for help at Homework Club; **don’t** do nothing!
- If you have a number of things to do, **prioritise!** Ask yourself which it is important to do first, second and so on, and plan your time carefully.
- Choose a suitable time and place and, if possible, make sure you have all the books and equipment you need when you sit down to work; try to work somewhere where you will not be disturbed or distracted.

While doing your homework:

- If your work is taking a long time, give yourself a short break, and go back to it with a fresh mind.
- If it is taking much longer than was intended, stop at a suitable point and explain this to your teacher; he or she will understand if it is clear that you have done your best to finish.
- Take pride in all your work! Don’t just do the bare minimum in the shortest possible time!

After doing your homework:

- Check it!
- Hand it in on time!

Every day:

- Check SMHW for tasks you may have over-looked.
- Check the exercise books you’ve used during the day, stick in loose sheets and finish off any underlining, dates, titles etc. whilst the lessons are fresh in your mind.

Every weekend:

Check your pocket planner and SMHW. Make a list of any things you need to bring for each day during the coming week (e.g. work to hand in, PE kit, musical instruments, ingredients, library books).

School Policies\Teaching & Learning

Last reviewed: June 2020
Due for review: June 2021
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Appendix 3 – HOMEWORK ADVICE FOR PARENTS

What is “homework”?

“Homework” is any work or activity which your child is asked to do outside lesson time. It is an essential part of the learning process and we place a strong emphasis on it at Parmiter’s. Staff are required to set and assess appropriate homework on a regular basis. All students across the age and ability range are expected to complete homework tasks. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in the process.

Principles

We believe that homework plays an important part in your child’s learning because:

- it encourages them to develop the skills, confidence and motivation to study effectively on their own; this is vital given the importance of lifelong learning and adaptability;
- it encourages good time management;
- it allows practice of skills learned in the classroom and extends school learning which permits more rapid progress to be made in school;
- it makes use of outside interests and resources;
- it may involve you and other adults in their work, improving home-school and community-school links.

What is the teachers’ role in homework?

- Teachers regularly set a variety of tasks or activities which need to be done partly or completely out of school time.
- The tasks take different lengths of time to complete; some take half an hour, some go on in stages for a number of weeks. In each week of term, students will normally have either a homework task or work that they can carry on with for virtually every subject they take. These activities arise naturally out of the work in the classroom. They are set according to the homework timetable which is published at the beginning of the year.
- Tasks have *deadlines* which are made clear to students.
- Teachers check who has met the deadline and will challenge any who do not. If a student often fails to do homework without good reason, parents are informed.
- As well as doing set tasks for homework, students are expected to develop their knowledge and skills independently. If, for some reason (such as teacher absence), a homework is not set, this does not mean that there is no work to do. Students should take responsibility for their learning by ensuring that all their work is up-to-date or by consolidating their knowledge and skills through use of text books, internet resources or the VLE.
- Every student is given a login for SMHW where their homework tasks and deadlines will be published.
- The topics of homework and study skills are covered regularly in the Life Skills/Tutorial programme.

What can you do to help?

- Appreciate the need for independent study and try to provide a place for it, as free from distractions as possible.
- Support your child by showing an interest and giving encouragement; ask them to explain the work to you. This can develop their understanding and their reasoning skills.
- Help them plan their time and organise themselves so that they remember to bring to school each day the materials that they need, and to *take home* the work they need to do each evening.
- Check SMHW weekly and monitor the tasks being set.
- Inform staff if there is a genuine reason for homework not done.
- Encourage your child to catch up on work missed due to absence.