



St. Francis' College ***Senior Homework Policy***

Introduction

The 'College' refers to all the staff and pupils of the Prep department and Senior School which includes Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS), Pre-prep (Key Stage 1), Prep (Key Stage 2), and Senior School (Key Stages 3-5).

St. Francis' College is an independent selective, day and boarding school of approximately 400 pupils between the ages of 3 and 18 years.

Policy

Research over a number of years in this and other countries has shown that homework can make an important contribution to pupils' progress at school. Spending any time doing homework shows benefits, but the effects are greater for students who put in two to three hours a night, according to a 2012 study published by the Department for Education.

The finding on homework runs counter to previous research which shows a "relatively modest" link between homework and achievement at secondary school. The academics involved in the latest research say their study emphasises what students actually do, rather than how much work the school has set. The research was conducted by academics from the Institute of Education, Oxford and Birkbeck College, part of the University of London. It tracked around 3,000 children from pre-school to the age of 14.

In this country there is evidence that pupils in the highest achieving schools spend more time on learning activities at home than pupils in other schools.

Homework need not, and should not, get in the way of other activities which they may do after school such as sport, music and clubs of all kinds; these activities can be very beneficial.

Ethos

St. Francis' College believes that homework plays an essential role in the curriculum and should be set regularly for all pupils. Staff and pupils regard homework as an integral part of the curriculum - it is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning. Homework is marked according to the College Marking Policy.

Purposes of Homework

Part of our teaching should take account of the need to support pupils in the development of the skills necessary for successful independent study.

- We regard homework as an opportunity for pupils to develop skills of independent learning and therefore homework is formally recorded by both the pupil and the member of staff, and outcomes are monitored.
- Homework provides an opportunity for differentiation and should be an encouragement to individual pupils to develop research and project work skills.
- Not all homework needs to be a written task, but whatever the task it should be clearly defined for pupils.
- Homework provides an opportunity for pupils to learn to work within a timeframe; it is important that they do not spend excessive amounts of time on work but equally that it is given sufficient time to produce a good standard.

Guidelines for Homework

Within each Department clear standards need to be established for pupils about the quality of work expected to be produced during homework time. Staff are advised to:

- Ensure that the tasks are an integral element of their lesson planning and build the feedback from the homework into a following lesson.
- When setting homework make it clear to pupils when outside assistance is appropriate.
- Adhere to the published timetable when setting homework.
- Set assignments which will take students between 20 and 30 minutes (in Key Stage 3) and between 30 and 40 minutes (in Key Stage 4). Students in Key Stage 5 should expect to spend between 2½ hours and 4 hours per A Level per week on homework and independent study. If students are unable to complete their homework within this timeframe, they should be encouraged to write a note to their teacher in the margin of their exercise book and then stop.
- Set homework tasks in writing, for example on the board and make sure that pupils write them down in their planners.
- Collect feedback on the success of the tasks set. This can be undertaken through the use of questionnaires, homework diaries, record sheets or the pupils' exercise books. Problems and successes should be reviewed.
- Ensure that homework is completed to a satisfactory standard and handed in on time. Regular failure to do so should be followed up by the subject teacher. The Form Tutor should be kept informed.

Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of the Deputy Head – Academic to publish a homework timetable at the start of each academic year.
- It is the responsibility of the Form Tutor to monitor the recording of homework and any responses from parents.
- It is the responsibility of each Head of Department to give guidance to subject staff about the appropriateness of homework tasks and to plan in the longer term for resources. They should ensure that subject staff are setting appropriate homework and that it is marked and returned in accordance with the College’s Marking Policy and Assessment Policy and the Department’s Handbook.
- It is the responsibility of each Teacher to set homework tasks and return them as soon as practicably possible, providing relevant feedback. This may be through class work (for example class discussion or feedback on work of which the homework assignment is a part) or through tests (for example tables and spellings), or through individual comments from their teacher (for example on written assignments). Providing individual written feedback is, of course, demanding on teachers’ time. The range of tasks set for homework should take this into account, with the aim of keeping the workload of teachers manageable. Other strategies to achieve this objective should also be employed, such as asking pupils to review their own work in small groups.

Monitoring and Review

Heads of Department and members of the Senior Leadership Team will monitor through discussion with pupils and teachers and through regular work scrutinies.

Related Documents

Curriculum Policy
Assessment Policy
Marking Policy
Staff Handbook

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