BRENTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

Homework Policy

School Vision Statement

Brentside High School challenges all to achieve excellence as lifelong learners with the highest expectations of themselves and others. No exceptions, no excuses.

Our vision is that all students will benefit from homework as part of outstanding learning provision. We aim to work in partnership with students and their families to ensure progress over time. This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies, in particular the assessment, teaching and learning, feedback, and literacy policies.

The OFSTED outstanding teaching and learning criteria states that “Teachers use well-judged and often imaginative teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework that, together with clearly directed and timely support and intervention, match individual needs accurately. Consequently, pupils learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.” (School Inspection Handbook, 2014)

The purpose and types of homework

Homework can serve a range of purposes. For example:

1. Supporting students to meet the curriculum assessment criteria
2. Consolidating learning
3. Revising, practising and memorising skills and learning
4. Preparing for new learning
5. Researching to prepare for, to extend and enrich learning
6. Pre-learning to ensure classroom successes and participation
7. Applying learning in new contexts and to new problems
8. Investigating own interests stemming from core learning
9. Supporting coursework/controlled assessments

The nature and frequency of homework

The nature and frequency of homework will vary according to both key stage and subject. We have fixed time allocations per subject per fortnight to support parents and students in managing the workload. Subjects with greater curriculum time will also have more homework time allocated to them. Practical subjects will also have after school sessions to support students. This is set out clearly in the student’s individual homework timetable and can also be found in the staff read area T:\STAFF READ\General information\Guidance for staff\Homework timetables.

Subject areas will set the project-based homework for at least one half-term per year group at key stage 3. This project will replace the usual homework being set during the allocated half-term, where the project is set across all subjects on a carousel basis.

The project-based homework may be spread over a period of 4 to 6 weeks with two assessment opportunities built-in for teachers to review the work, and for students to respond to the feedback given.

At key stage 5, homework is set every contact period, with the expectation of a minimum of 20 hours extra learning outside the classroom each week.
Teachers should set time aside in lesson for students to respond to feedback; to revisit learning objectives/success criteria and ask questions to further improve their understanding – Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time. Students should respond to both written and verbal feedback in green pen, so that it is clear to the teacher that they have acted on the feedback. Teachers have the option of setting the improvement task as a piece of homework. Refer to the feedback policy for the frequency of marking homework.

The following guidelines are, therefore, generic in nature. Staff should:

1. Provide varying types of homework set within a student’s capabilities
2. Ensure students are given adequate notice of homework tasks
3. Support students who experience difficulty in completion of homework tasks to ensure a sense of achievement and to allow their self-esteem to grow. Departments are encouraged to seek assistance and advice from the Learning Support Department wherever appropriate
4. Be sensitive to the social environment in which each child lives
5. Make available any resources required to complete the homework task
6. Establish a routine, known to both students and parents, regarding setting, collecting and giving feedback on homework
7. Ensure feedback is positive with clear targets to help student progress
8. Maintain records of homework set and individual student achievement
9. Evaluate and monitor the quality of homework tasks regularly.

The school places great value on homework and it is important to emphasise to both parents and students that learning in any subject can be significantly enhanced by undertaking work out of school. The key to this process is a shared understanding of the benefits of the homework tasks, i.e. the activities to be undertaken must have an obvious relevance to the individual student’s learning process.

**Differentiation of homework**

Homework must always be differentiated in the same way as classwork material. The homework set must be appropriate to the ability and the reading skills of the learner. Consideration should be given to making homework freestanding i.e. aimed at consolidating, but not dependent on, full understanding of the work done in class.

When setting homework, staff must:

1. Give enough guidance for the student
2. Scaffold where necessary
3. Provide notes or handouts for individual students.

**The student planner**

All students are provided with an attractive homework planner at the start of the year. This is the key tool for communicating homework activities to parents and should be used as fully as possible (other than simply to record what homework has to be done and the date by which it has to be done) for example:

1. To obtain a parental signature.
2. To communicate (briefly) with parents, particularly where there are concerns over non-completion of homework.

Class teachers should build a ‘Student Planner’ monitoring moment into their routines. Similarly, there are monitoring roles for subject leaders, pastoral staff and senior leadership.
Implementation of the policy - responsibilities

All staff

- To be aware of the principles of the policy and the role they contribute to its implementation.

Teaching staff

- To implement the policy by ensuring that they have read it and are familiar with its content
- To set homework according to the timetable and record on the VLE
- To provide the stimulus for all our students
- To give full and comprehensive instructions to their students
- To set deadlines for completed work and ensure that they are met
- To mark and return all homework promptly in line with the feedback policy, including the improvement task.
- To provide help and support to their students when it is required, and to seek additional support from the Learning Support department if needed.
- To liaise with the subject leader, form tutor and Learning Support department (where applicable) for additional support, guidance or strategies when problems arise.
- To provide information for parents and opportunities for parental support.

Subject leaders

- To consistently monitor and evaluate the impact of homework on students’ learning and progress at departmental level in line with the quality assurance of teaching and learning. For example, subject leaders should monitor the behaviour management system on a regular basis where sanctions may have been given for lack of homework or persistent poor quality homework. The recording of homework on the VLE should be checked and monitored.
- To consistently monitor and evaluate the delivery of the policy at departmental level in line with the quality assurance of teaching and learning, and in line with the homework timetable.
- To provide the appropriate support to team members through training, materials and/or coaching. This may include the organisation and support required to enable team members to set sanctions at departmental level for persistent poor quality of homework.

Pastoral team

- To consistently monitor and evaluate the impact of the homework policy on students’ learning and progress at pastoral level in line with the quality assurance of teaching and learning. For example, form tutors should check the behavioural management system on a regular basis where sanctions may have been given for lack of homework or persistent poor quality homework.
- To consistently monitor and evaluate the delivery of the policy at pastoral level in line with the quality assurance of teaching and learning. For example, form tutors should check students’ homework planners for the recording of homework set in line with the homework timetable.
- Form tutors should check and sign student planners on a weekly basis.
- Form tutors should note and respond to any comments written in planners by parents.

Senior leaders

- To consistently monitor and evaluate the impact of the homework being set on the learning and progress of students in line with the quality assurance of teaching and learning.
- To consistently monitor and evaluate the delivery of the homework being set school wide, and in line with the quality assurance of teaching and learning.
- To provide the appropriate support through training and resources for departments and individuals.
- To update the policy in response to the changing needs of the school.
**Students**

- To be prepared for learning and have a positive attitude to learning to enable teachers to effectively implement the policy.
- To listen to homework instructions in class.
- To copy down instructions for the task and deadline date into their planner.
- To ensure that homework is completed and handed in to meet the deadline.
- To complete all homework to the best of their ability.
- To seek advice and support when required with the subject teacher, in the first instance.

**Parents/carers**

- To support the homework policy in line with the Home School Agreement.
- To check the presentation and content of all homework being returned to school.
- To encourage their child to produce all homework to the best of their ability.
- To sign the student planner each week.
- To provide the school with information about any problems with homework and communicate this through the student planner, in the first instance, or by contacting the school directly.

**Governors**

- To ensure the effective and rigorous implementation of the policy, through monitoring and evaluating.