

# Homework Policy

## Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College



**Approved by:** Governing Body

**Date:** May 2019

**Last reviewed on:**

**Next review due by:** January 2022

**We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for students with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.**

## **Introduction**

Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College adopts a Homework policy that is underpinned by our College Virtues and focusses on students growing and developing as people of good character. This policy is rooted in our mission which states that "Everything we do is for the greater glory of God."

This policy is designed to ensure consistency across the college in terms of homework setting and marking. This policy aims to ensure that students are given the opportunity to develop specific skills, knowledge and understanding outside the classroom, taking into consideration workload for both teachers and students.

*"Education is holy. Everything connected with human living and the means by which we understand it and come to terms with it is part of the process of God's revelation to humanity, whether those engaged in it are conscious of it or not. Therefore the process of teaching and learning is a holy act... since the world we live in is God's, all teaching and learning are related to him in some way. "*  
*Bishops Conference (2000)*

Our aim is to create and sustain a happy and safe place of learning in which everyone can realise their full potential and feels loved and valued. As a Catholic College, we affirm our commitment to the development of the whole individual. This involves promoting a climate where all work diligently in a spirit that upholds our adopted personal virtues and values.

We aim to foster an environment in which young people are challenged and encouraged to take full responsibility for their learning. As we are a Catholic college, learning is deemed to be an act of worship in itself, as in our work we strive to interpret God's word. Through this policy we aim to develop in our students the virtues; Respectful, Knowledgeable, Curious and Resilient.

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## **Rationale: Why is homework important?**

Learning at home is an essential part of good education. Regular homework is important, as it serves as an intellectual discipline, establishes good study habits, eases time constraints on the amount of curricular material that can be covered in class, and supplements and reinforces work done in school. In addition, it fosters student initiative, independence, and responsibility, and brings home and school closer together. It helps students to become confident and independent in their learning, which will help throughout their time at school, and in adult life. Homework can also give opportunities for long term research and enquiries, and it gives students valuable experience of working to deadlines.

Homework has been extensively researched. The evidence tells us that students in schools which give more homework perform better. Research has shown that if a student completes an hour's homework per school night for five years, it is the equivalent of an extra school year.

Or

Research has shown that impactful homework can add on average 5 months' additional progress in a year.

Another important benefit of carrying out homework tasks is that it can also involve parents and others in the students' work. Research here tells us that where parents and carers are involved in the learning of their children, these students are more successful at school.

## The importance of regular homework habits

At Blessed Edwards we endeavour to set regular homework that is impactful. Homework will be set at least once a week in the majority of subjects. There will be exceptions for subjects which are practical-based. There are a variety of tasks which will be set out in this policy. In order to foster good learning habits at home, we will expect students to be working on homework each school night, with a break on a Friday night. We also expect some work preparation to be carried out at the weekend, fitting in with family and other commitments. It is not possible to say exactly how much time each night a student will spend studying at home, however here are some guidelines:

- In years 7 and 8, students should be spending 30 minutes to an hour on homework each night, for four nights and one or two hours at the weekend.
- In Year 9, students should be spending a minimum of 45 minutes per night for four nights and approximately two hours at the weekend.
- In Year 10, in order to give dedicated time to GCSE homework tasks and carry out ongoing revision, we expect students to work for a minimum of one hour each night, for four nights and for 2-3 hours at the weekend. In the lead up to assessments, students will need to increase the hours of study for extra revision.
- In Year 11 we expect students to work for a minimum of 2 hours each night after school for four nights and 4 hours at the weekend. This will increase in the lead up to mock examinations and the GCSE's.

## Examples of homework tasks:

1. **Reading:** Evidence suggests that children who read for enjoyment every day not only perform better in tests than those who don't, but also develop a broader vocabulary, increased general knowledge and a better understanding of other cultures. One Department for Education study showed that there "is a difference in reading performance equivalent to just over a year's schooling between young people who never read for enjoyment and those who read for up to 30 minutes per day". At Blessed Edwards Oldcorne we recognise the importance of reading and expect that every student should be reading every day for a minimum of 30 minutes.
2. **Learning spellings and definitions of key vocabulary:** Without a sufficient understanding of words students cannot understand others or express their own ideas. Vocabulary is important across the curriculum. It is intimately connected to both effective reading and writing skills, and these skills in turn are necessary for doing well in school. Research studies

have shown that in most cases students have to see, read and interact with words 5-7 times before they are admitted to long-term memory.

3. **Quizzing:** Quizzing is proven by research to have a significant impact on long term memory retention. Quizzing homework is designed to enable the students to develop the skills needed to be effective learners. It is a simple yet effective memory strategy that instructs students how to chunk, memorise and recall key elements of learning. It is essential that students master this skill as the new GCSE specifications require an even stronger command of subject knowledge. Quizzing enables students to master information at home by ensuring that it is memorised over a longer period of time. It will hugely reduce the pressure of exams as the learning is spread over a number of years.
4. **Flashcard creation and use:** Flashcards are another way of quizzing and are a powerful tool to aid memorisation of key facts. Research shows that when made correctly, flash cards test knowledge so long-term memory is increased and therefore aiding recall in exams at the end of the course. Flashcards exercise the mental process of active recall and are a quick way of testing what you know. Students need to remember what they learn making this method of homework effective when testing themselves in recall of subject knowledge multiple times.
5. **Flipping the classroom:** The flipped classroom requires students to carry out simple research for the next lesson so that they are more prepared for new learning. Students have greater opportunity to ask the teacher questions if they have read around a topic first and then they can and participate and are informed and collaborative work that reinforces learning. Teachers can also spend more time looking at skills and misconceptions than on delivering new content if it's been studied beforehand.
6. **Online:** Interactive online packages such as Method Maths and My GCSE Science support students' learning by testing what they have learnt in class and then providing instant feedback. The online packages through the use of self-marking quizzes and teacher feedback, give students a clear picture of their progress and helps them take steps to improve their results.

These are just a few examples of the different types of homework activities that we plan to assign. Teachers will continue to set tasks that are relevant, meaningful and impactful.

## Responsibility for implementation of homework

### The role of the Class Teacher:

- To set purposeful homework which is relevant to the course of study
- To give full and comprehensive instructions for completion
- To ensure appropriate resources are available
- To set deadlines for completed work and ensure that they are met
- To provide feedback
- To provide help and support as and when required

### The role of the Form Tutor:

- To monitor that homework is being recorded and completed
- To check that the planner is being signed by the parent or carer

- To carry out meaningful conversations with students who require additional support with the completion of homework tasks and inform subject teachers of any issues
- To note and respond to any comments written in planners by parents;
- Form tutors should draw the attention of the relevant Head of Year of students who regularly have difficulties with homework so relevant interventions can be implemented

#### **The role of the Head of Department**

- To monitor the quality and quantity of the extended learning set
- To ensure that marking of homework is carried out in line with the School's feedback policy

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Heads of Department will ensure their departmental homework guidelines support the school policy. They will also undertake quality assurance to ensure that homework is allowing students to progress in their learning. This may involve work scrutiny/review, learning walks, lesson observations, pupil voice and collaborative moderation during planning meetings. Line Managers will review implementation of the homework policy each year.

## **Creating the right environment for learning at home**

We encourage that all parents support the college homework strategy in the following ways:

- aim to provide a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which students can do their homework or help students attend other places where homework can be done, such as the Library
- make it clear to students that they value homework, and support the school in explaining how it can help them make progress at school
- encourage students and praise them when they have completed homework
- expect deadlines to be met and check that they are
- check that tasks have been set in line with the homework timetable
- sign the homework planner once a week
- encourage and support your son/daughter to read for at least 30 minutes every day