

## **Down High School**

### **HOMEWORK POLICY**

#### ***The Purpose of Homework***

A strong homework philosophy is central to the ethos of a high-achieving grammar school:

- It affirms high expectations within the classroom
- It encourages the development of pupils' understanding of topics and allows the pupil to be personally involved in the learning process
- It encourages pupils to develop their learning skills, such as research techniques, leading to an increase in intellectual curiosity
- It instils a self-disciplined study culture that will prepare them for 6<sup>th</sup> form, university and, increasingly, the world of work
- It encourages the revision and consolidation of work covered in class
- It develops links between home and school

#### ***The Vision for Homework***

In Down High School, the importance of homework will be valued by pupils, parents and teachers. Homework tasks will be well planned, effectively assimilated into lessons and recorded accurately in Homework Diaries. Homework will be viewed as useful and relevant by learners and their parents, contributory to the learning process, encouraging of new and emerging technologies, varied and interesting and not seen by busy teachers as an extra burden. Homework will either be marked, checked, observed in class activity, peer-assessed or self-assessed. Homework will encourage a strong study culture that develops a curiosity for learning and which will prepare pupils for assessment at all levels as well as for the world of work.

It is envisaged that homework will be managed and monitored effectively through the Homework Diary and that parents will be informed in the event of deadlines being missed. Departments and subject teachers will be supported by procedures established to deal with the non-completion of homework. The classroom teacher will have high expectations and will ensure that pupils record accurately and complete their homework tasks. The Form Teacher will monitor pupils' use of the Homework Diary.

The high expectations set for the planning, setting, recording and monitoring of homework will help to deliver strong outcomes in terms of laying the foundations for strong academic results and preparing pupils for university education.

### ***The National Standards***

The public service website [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) offers the following *national* guidelines for homework:

[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/SchoolLife/DG\\_179508](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/SchoolLife/DG_179508)

<b>YEAR GROUP</b>	<b>TIME PER WEEKDAY</b>
Years 8 and 9	45 – 90 minutes
Year 10	60 – 120 minutes
Years 11 and 12	90 – 150 minutes
Years 13 and 14	180 minutes

**A realistic amount of homework for Down High School would be:**

<b>YEAR GROUP</b>	<b>TIME PER DAY</b>
Years 8	70 minutes
Year 9	80 minutes
Years 10	90 minutes
Years 11-12	120 minutes
Years 13-14	150 minutes (exc. P. Study)

### ***Types of Homework***

- In some cases, it is expected that homework may be the continuation of work started in class, but such homework must be organised so that every pupil receives a homework task that will occupy the appropriate length of time (and that this is recorded in the Homework Diary). If some pupils in the class have not kept up with the pace of the work, they should be set a differentiated task or one that lessens the work so that these pupils are not being unduly punished. Finishing off work started in class can penalise pupils who work at a slower pace or have difficulties with a particular subject. Furthermore, pupils with SEN can feel that they are being punished, while high-achieving pupils will not be sufficiently challenged since they will have classwork completed.
- Discrete tasks that will be checked, marked, peer/self-assessed.
- Preparation for work that will be done during the next class.
- Research task – can be ICT related.
- Preparing a speech, roleplay etc.
- Note-making, mindmapping
- Designing posters, presentations, leaflets etc.
- Consolidation of weekly work – fostering good study habits

- Memorising core facts
- Researching and writing up key words and definitions for Homework Diary Glossaries
- Preparation for tests

Homework should be stimulating and meaningful so that pupils and parents can see it as relevant.

### ***The Homework Diary and the role of Subject Teachers***

After a successful Year 8 pilot in 2009-10, a new format of the Homework Diary was introduced for pupils in all years in September 2010. It is hoped that the new Homework Diaries, in conjunction with effective planning of learning and teaching, will produce positive outcomes:

- Homework will be recorded on the day that the homework is due so that the pupils become future-focused and learn to plan accordingly.
- Subject teachers will be asked to set homework tasks **well in advance** of the bell. Homework could even feature in the learning intentions. Homework tasks must be written on the board/ displayed using the digital projector and copied accurately into Homework Diaries. The teacher should ensure that all pupils understand the task before the end of the lesson.
- Teachers must also indicate the expected amount of time that pupils should be working on a particular task. This will set a clear marker for the pupils who produce work that is brief and under-developed, but it will also help to deter those pupils who spend longer on homework tasks than they need to. It is important that increasing the amount of homework does not cause undue stress for those who, by their nature, are currently working hard and who may have a tendency to spend unduly long periods of time doing homework.
- In the event of homework not being completed/submitted, the classroom teacher must indicate this in the pupil's Homework Diary.
- Pupils and parents will be surveyed on the use of Homework Diaries and on the nature of homework.

### ***Monitoring Homework***

It is simply impossible for teachers to mark every single piece of homework. Formative assessment strategies can be used and feedback generated by pupils and peers as well as the teacher. In situations where a classroom teacher has been setting insufficient homework, it is possible that additional homework can be set without the workload increasing. Intra-departmental collaboration can be increased by the establishment of a centralised electronic homework resource bank, a model of good practice that is already used in some departments. It should be impressed on the child that it is his/her responsibility to produce work to a standard demanded by the expectations of the teacher.

Outside of departments, homework levels and the appropriateness of tasks can be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.

***The Standards Expected of the Student***

- Pupils will be expected to take their Homework Diary from their schoolbags at the start of each lesson and place it on the desk. Teachers, Year Heads and Senior Leaders will look at Homework Diaries on a random basis.
- Pupils will record accurately in their diaries the homework set by teachers and should make every effort to ensure that work is completed and (if required) submitted on time. The homework should be entered into the diary on the date that the work is due.
- The Homework Diary should be kept neat, tidy and free from graffiti.
- Students should speak with their teacher if they are experiencing any form of difficulty with their homework.
- Pupils should make an effort to plan their work throughout the week/term to avoid becoming overburdened.

***The Role of Parents***

- It is expected that parents will cooperate fully with the school in setting high standards for homework. Parents will ensure that appropriate conditions are created at home to help their child work in a quiet space, away from the distractions of television, music etc.
- It is expected that parents will sign their child's Homework Diary on a weekly basis and respond to teacher concerns where appropriate. Parents can discuss homework or other matters with their child's Form Teacher.
- The increasing tendency of older students to seek part-time employment is an entitlement, but the school expects that parents will endeavour to limit the number of hours worked weekly by their child so that academic progress is not impeded.

***Whole-School Approach to Sanctions for  
Failure to Produce Homework***

*Individual classroom teachers and the school will promote a culture of expectation, whereby it is not expected that pupils will fail to produce homework. Where homework is not submitted, a clear and consistent approach will be adopted.*

<b>OFFENCE WITHIN SUBJECT</b>	<b>SANCTION</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	Discuss with the pupil his/her failure to produce the homework and ascertain reasons for non-submission. The teacher will record the incident in the Homework Diary, using the appropriate code. The pupil will submit the homework at the start of the next class.
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	The pupil will be set a piece of work of equal length to the missed homework and will be expected to produce this plus the homework at the start of the next class. The teacher will record the incident in the Homework Diary, using the appropriate code.
<b>3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup></b>	The pupil will be placed in either a Break or Lunchtime detention (both 20 minutes) supervised by the subject teacher <b>or</b> given additional work to complete as an alternative to Break/Lunchtime detention. The teacher will record the incident in the Homework Diary and the Head of Department will be informed. A teacher may detain a child over lunch when he or she is teaching as long as the detained pupil is older than the pupils in the timetabled class, the reason for the detention is not discussed in front of this class and the child does not endure any embarrassment. In some departments, colleagues may wish to assist each other with the supervision of Breaktime/Lunchtime Detentions (as timetables permit). Pupils placed in Lunchtime detention will have had fifteen minutes at the start of the session to have lunch but must appear punctually.
<b>6<sup>th</sup> and after</b>	The teacher will record the incident in the Homework Diary. The pupil will be placed in <b>after-school</b> detention using the normal processes (this will include written contact with parents). The Form Teacher and Year Head will be informed.

**At the beginning of each term, each child will start with a “clean slate” and the sanctions process will begin again.**

The Head of Year will monitor the use of the After-School Detention.

- In the event of a pupil being placed in an after-school detention for homework-related issues in **two** subjects, the Year Head will arrange for the parents to come into school to discuss their child’s approach to homework and agree on a strategy for improvement, including the effective use of the Diary and the expectations of the school.
- In the event of a pupil being placed in an after-school detention for homework-related issues in **three** subjects, the Year Head will arrange for the parents to come into school to attend a meeting with the Year Head and the Head of School.
- In the event of a pupil being placed in an after-school detention for homework-related issues in **more than three** subjects, the Year Head will arrange for the parents to come into school to attend a meeting with the Year Head and the Principal.