



BRIDGEWATER
HIGH SCHOOL
LEARNING WITH PRIDE AND JOY

HOMework

at Bridgewater High School





“Homework is not an optional extra, but an essential part of a good education”
-1999 White Paper, Excellence in Schools

1. THE PURPOSE AND IMPACT OF HOMEWORK (including research)

Ultimately the goal of homework is to add value to learning whether this be through the consolidation of skills gained during the school day, embedding/extending knowledge through more in-depth study or some form of preparation (e.g. revision or pre-learning). As such, any homework which engages students with learning in a particular subject from one lesson to the next can be seen to be of value. Alongside these educational benefits, the use of homework also encourages pupils to develop effective study skills, time management techniques and the self-discipline needed to be well-rounded, independent lifelong learners.

As a starting point, it is important to consider how homework can be most beneficial, including the most effective types of homework.

The **Educational Endowment Foundation** states that:

- * Homework has a **positive impact** on average (+ 5 months), particularly with pupils in secondary schools.
- * Some pupils may not have a quiet space for home learning – it is important for schools to consider how **home learning can be supported** (e.g. through providing homework clubs for pupils).
- * Homework that is **linked to classroom work** tends to be more effective. In particular, studies that included **feedback** on homework had higher impacts on learning.
- * It is important to make the **purpose** of homework clear to pupils (e.g. to increase a specific area of knowledge, or to develop fluency in a particular area).
- * The **quality** of the task set appears to be more important than the quantity of work required from the pupil. There is some evidence that the impact of homework **diminishes as the amount of time pupils spend on it increases**. The studies reviewed with the highest impacts set homework **twice a week** in a particular subject.
- * Evidence also suggests that how homework **relates to learning** during normal school time is important. In the most effective examples homework was an **integral part of**



learning, rather than an add-on. To maximise impact, it also appears to be important that students are provided with high quality feedback on their work.

* Most homework set is individual, studies involving **collaboration with peers** have higher effects (+6 months), though the number of studies is small.

* Studies involving **digital technology** typically have greater impact (+ 6 months).

* Surveys in England suggest that pupils from **disadvantage backgrounds** are less likely to have a quiet working space, are less likely to have access to a device suitable for learning or a stable internet connection and may receive less parental support to complete homework and develop effective learning habits. **These difficulties may increase the gap in attainment for disadvantaged pupils.**

The **EEF** goes on to outline the following **active ingredients** with regard to the setting of homework:

Considering the quality of homework over the quantity.

Using well-designed tasks that are linked to classroom learning.

Clearly setting out the aims of homework to pupils.

Understanding and addressing any barriers to completion, such as access to a learning device or resources.

Explicitly teaching independent learning strategies.

Providing high-quality feedback to improve pupil learning.

Monitoring the impact homework on pupil engagement, progress and attainment.



Further research from the **Huntingdon Research School** indicates that:

* Homework (or home learning, or “extended learning” labelled at Huntingdon) is seemingly most effective when it involves **practice or rehearsal** of subject matter **already taught**. Students should not typically be exposed to new material for their home learning, unless they are judged more expert learners.

* Complex, open ended homework is often completed least effectively; whereas, **short, frequent** homework, closely monitored by teachers is more likely to have **more impact**. This could include summarising notes; using graphic organisers to recast classroom materials; guided research; exam question practise; guided revision etc.

* Teacher **scaffolding** is essential to guide effective home learning. **Parental involvement is desirable**, but it should not be essential, otherwise the nature of the task is likely too complex for successful completion.

2. BRIDGEWATER'S ACTIVE INGREDIENTS

Based on the research above, alongside some in-house investigations via pupil voice, a sample of distributed homeworks and discussion at HoF level, our active ingredients are as below. Pupils must be provided the necessary space and support in school also.

Purpose: Pupils must understand the purpose of a homework (see categorisations) and how it links to their classroom learning. Homeworks should be planned for in schemes (whilst still allowing responsive flexibility).

Efficiency: Shorter (little and often) homeworks are advised, but ones which still require hard thinking.

Ownership: Any kind of choice helps connect pupils with the homework aids motivation and where appropriate this should be connected to pupil ability.

Competence: Pupils must be able to tackle the homework without help and wherever possible this means taking time in class to ensure the homework is clearly explained.



3. PROTOCOLS

Linked to the first ingredient above (and the EEF research) it is vital that teachers make clear to pupils the purpose of any particular homework. As such, all Bridgewater homeworks should start with one of the following key words in capital letters followed by a colon:

- * **CONSOLIDATION** (e.g. applying/extending previously learnt skills)
- * **PREPARATION** (e.g. pre-reading)
- * **REVISION** (e.g. for tests – set as purple on Satchel One)
- * **OTHER** (e.g. longer projects or vital notices)
- * **CLASSWORK** (for pupils working at home e.g. long-term sick, strike days
- set as red on Satchel one)

Additional teacher protocols for the setting of homework are:

- * ALL homeworks must be set on Satchel One regardless of completion (e.g. even if just to link to SparxMaths or any other such online package).
- * Teachers should always check the following settings on Satchel One:
 - type of assignment (e.g. Class Test)
 - type of submission (e.g. OneNote)
 - completion time (this is very important for student planning)
 - issue date (if necessary – see below)
- * Teachers should not set a homework during the weekend (or one which must be completed over a weekend) or set a homework in unsociable hours (post 7pm).
- * For revision homeworks, teachers should ensure that pupils are given adequate preparation time for tests and that the test does take place on the date stated.



4. FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES AND FREQUENCY

HoFs/HoDs are responsible for the following:

- * Ensuring that schemes of work make clear the key homeworks that are needed to support learning for each unit.
- * Checking the distribution of homeworks within their faculty via the automated reports published weekly and addressing where any anomalies are noted (e.g. in staff distribution, or an imbalance in types of homeworks being issued).
- * Creating a manageable system for addressing non-compliance, e.g. through compulsory interventions (including Study Support sessions as the results of repeated 5s given in lessons), parental contact, etc.
- * Deciding upon an appropriate frequency for their subject area. This will inevitably vary from subject to subject as a subject such as Maths, for example, may prefer shorter frequent practice-style homeworks whereas other subjects may favour more in-depth tasks on a less frequent basis.
- * As a broad rule, a reasonable expectation for the time students spend on homework per school day would be:

| | |
|-----------|----------------|
| Y7 & 8: | 45-90 minutes |
| Y9: | 60-120 minutes |
| Y10 & 11: | 90-150 minutes |

It is vital to note that pupils are encouraged to complete additional proactive study that sits outside of the prescribed homework tasks (most notably their own task-based revision of prior work through flash cards, knowledge organisers, etc.): Homework frequency is a guide only and should not limit pupils in any way.



5. PARENT/CARER INVOLVEMENT

Finally, the use of homework is a key way in which parents/carers can feel involved in their child's learning. Ways in which parents/carers can support their child's learning through homework include:

- * Providing a peaceful place in which their child can do their homework (which may include encouraging them to attend a homework club in school).
- * Helping their child to understand the value of homework tasks.
- * Monitoring homework expectations via Satchel One and praising their child when homework is completed and deadlines are met.
- * Supporting and guiding their child through individual homeworks where able and appropriate.