



CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

BASKERVILLE SCHOOL

HOMEWORK POLICY

Date reviewed: May 2016
Next review: May 2017

BASKERVILLE SCHOOL, FELLOWS LANE, HARBORNE, BIRMINGHAM, B17 9TS

TELEPHONE : 0121 427 3191
FAX : 0121 428 2204

VISION STATEMENT

We will ensure the entitlement of each student to access a variety of opportunities to promote academic, social, emotional and physical development.

We will use autistic specific, empathetic approaches and an autistic sympathetic learning environment to promote student learning and personal development.

We will provide choices and challenges in order to maximise potential and build upon strengths and interests.

All the members of the school community are valued equally and work in partnership with parents, carers and the wider community.

We will work within a supportive school framework to promote and celebrate individual success, integration into the wider community and prepare students for life after school.

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Baskerville School considers that it is good practice to have a homework requirement and routine, which consolidates and extends the learning from school. It also gives students the opportunity to generalise their skills into other settings ie home. The homework set should always reflect this consolidation, extension and generalisation process.

We recognise that homework can be both a supportive tool for students and families but can sometimes also cause conflict and tension at home. It is with this understanding that homework is set where appropriate and then well within the students' capabilities. It will often consolidate or reinforce learning rather than introduce new ideas.

THE KEY PRINCIPLES AND AIMS THAT UNDERPIN THE POLICY

- Homework is an important link between home, school and the wider community. It should promote links between home and school by giving parents the opportunity to be involved with their child's learning.
- For many of our students homework encourages and fosters a responsibility towards their learning. It should encourage independent work and completion of tasks.
- The school has developed an ethos which values and acknowledges the effort the students put into their homework, by arranging for its collection and marking.

ORGANISATION

The school timetable clearly identifies when homework should be set for each student, depending upon their key stage for students on the red and green pathways. There will also be a limited homework timetable for students on the purple pathway including English, Maths, Science, Humanities and RE. Students on the yellow pathway will be set tasks that they can do with parents and carers, like reading together, counting, sorting and matching. A realistic amount of homework will be set each night, approximately 10 minutes at Key Stage 3 and 20 minutes at Key Stages 4 and 5.

It is expected that homework will be completed outside of lesson time and returned to school the next day or in time for the next identified lesson. Those students who are residential at school or who are at after school clubs will be supported and will be given time to do their work. Where students on the red, green and purple pathways do not or cannot complete work at home, the class staff will arrange for the work to be completed in tutorial or during break times.

The teacher along with the Teaching Assistants in the classroom will organise for the collection and delivery of homework to the relevant member of staff. The Teaching Assistants play a vital role in reminding students about homework and where necessary providing supervision at break times if it has not been completed.

As part of developing good practice and responding to the needs of our students we have become aware that clear and explicit instructions on or attached to homework are essential. This provides valuable information to parents/carers as to how the homework should be completed and how the student would be best supported.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Homework is monitored and evaluated across the school in various ways. Class tutors along with the Head Teacher and Assistant Head Teacher (Pastoral) monitor the students' home-school books. These provide a valuable indication of the homework being set and the response from parents.

Tutors and Teaching Assistants monitor if the students in their tutor group are completing and coping with the homework set by noting and passing on parental comments to relevant staff. The subject teachers are responsible for setting and marking homework according to the timetable. Any persistent difficulties related to homework should be raised with the student's tutor or with the Assistant Head (Pastoral.)

Parents' comments in the home-school book, written on completed work and discussed during parents' evenings, provide valuable information towards the monitoring and evaluating of homework.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We believe in the rights of all students to further their learning by having appropriate homework set. It is with this belief that we will strive to set homework to meet individual students' needs and to consolidate learning. An important part of ensuring equal opportunities is the monitoring and evaluation of the process outlined above.

RELATED POLICIES/INFORMATION

- SEN Policy
- Assessment, Reporting & Recording Policy
- Homework hints for students with ASD (attached)

HOMEWORK HINTS FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DIFFICULTIES

Arguments relating to completing homework are often one of the concerns cited by parents but often schools are unaware of the struggle that parents / carers are faced with. This is particularly true of able youngsters who may conform in school but not at home.

The purpose of homework is to

- ✓ Develop a partnership between home and school
- ✓ Consolidate and reinforce skills, knowledge and understanding
- ✓ Exploit home, internet and library resources for learning
- ✓ Extend school learning through additional study and reading
- ✓ Encourage confidence and self discipline to study independently

To make homework work

- ✓ School must be able to count on support from home
- ✓ Parents / Carers need to be able to count on school support where there are difficulties
- ✓ There must be a written school policy that should be available to parents / carers
- ✓ Homework may need adaptation for students with specific difficulties to include more explicit instructions and directions

Difficulties with homework for children with ASD

- A student may be unable to work at home with other distractions, e.g. TV, music
- He/She may be a perfectionist and frequently rub or cross out work so that presentation may convey a lack of care rather than too much
- Teachers may not give sufficient explicit details that enable the student and his/her parent(s) to know exactly what to do
- He/She may take some comments too literally, e.g.
 - “Do the work yourself” – the student may not allow parents to give necessary help
 - “Do the work before school tomorrow” – the student may leave the work until 8:00am the next morning
 - Light-hearted threats to encourage completion may cause unnecessary anxiety
- Students may not be able to explain or translate information adequately to their parents for them to help
- Students may perceive parent’s help as criticism which may precipitate argument
- Students may not see their parent or carer as an authority to enforce the completion of homework

- Students may resist doing homework, seeing it as an opportunity to control others.
- Students may see school as the place to work and home as the place to play or relax, particularly if there are other children
- Students may not understand the consequences of not completing homework
- A student may have difficulty in coping with the variation of when homework is given and when it is not
- The need for a parent/carer to sit with them or settle them down when many parents work into the evening or have other children to care for
- If allowed, obsessional interests (e.g. computers, games consoles) can interfere with homework
- Some students work so hard at being good at school that at home they may be exhausted, fractious, overactive,
- Some students 'hand over' completion of their homework to willing adults or siblings if allowed

Helping students with ASD

- Develop a plan / timetable for when and how homework is set / completed
- Homework should initially be fun, achievable and on a regular basis to establish a pattern
- Rules regarding homework should be discussed and agreed with both parents and students
- Try to give some homework each day of about the same amount
- Write down the homework or give a handout outlining clearly what is required
- Put homework time on an evening planner at home
- Provide a quiet place to do homework with adults nearby
- Sit with the student and share with him/her what he/she has to do first
- Where possible and appropriate allow the student to complete homework on the computer as this may be more motivating
- Any rewards for completing homework should be small, attainable and preferably based on time or treats rather than material goods
- Siblings may need to be included in any homework and reward programme to encourage their support
- The student should be rewarded when homework is completed to the requirements specified rather than being criticised or punished for not completing the work. Punishment gives attention and can be rewarding. It also lowers self esteem.
- Students who are less academically able may be better completing homework based on more practical or social independence skills
- Most youngsters want to achieve but may need a formal 'contract' with constant monitoring
- Most parents want their children to succeed but require positive support from school