

Kingsthorpe Community College

Homework at KCC Policy and Practice

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HOMEWORK AT KCC - POLICY AND PRACTICE: January 2006

For Parents and Carers

The Benefits of Homework

Before discussing ways you can help your child with homework, it is important to discuss why teachers assign homework and how it benefits your child.

1) Why Do Teachers Assign Homework?

Homework should be a positive experience. It should encourage children to learn.

Homework can help children to:

- Review and practice what they have learned;
- Get ready for the next day's classes;
- Learn to use resources, such as libraries, reference materials, and encyclopaedias
- Explore subjects more fully than time permits in the classroom.

Homework can also help children develop good habits and attitudes. It can:

- Teach children to work independently;
- Encourage self-discipline and responsibility (assignments provide some youngsters with their first chance to manage time and meet deadlines)
- Encourage the desire to learn.

Parents who supervise homework and work with their children on assignments learn about their children's education and about the College.

2) Does homework help children learn?

Homework helps your child do better in school when assignments:

- Have a specific purpose
- Come with clear instructions
- Are well matched to a student's abilities
- Are designed to help develop a student's knowledge and skills
- Are completed successfully
- Are returned with constructive comments from the teacher

3) What is the right amount of homework?

From Year 7 to Year 11, small amounts of homework, gradually increased through the years, may well lead to improved academic achievement. Also, in Years 12 and 13, students who complete more homework are likely to achieve better grades, on average, than students who do less. The difference in test scores and grades between students who do more homework and those who do less is likely to increase as children move up through the years. There is no absolute rule about what is the "right" amount. As a guideline, however:

- In Years 7 and 8, students should have up to an hour per evening.
- In Years 9 to 11, they should be taking up to two hours (1½ hours, Year 9).
- For Years 12 and 13, up to 2 hours per school day is appropriate (as a minimum expectation) i.e. in the region of 2.5 hours per subject, assuming 4 are taken.

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Amounts that vary from these guidelines will be right for some students, depending, for example, on aptitudes and abilities. Every individual is different. You should contact your child's teachers if you are concerned about either too much or too little homework.

How can parents and carers encourage learning through homework?

Parents and carers play a very important role in the student's success. Parents and carers are asked to:

- Agree with your child on a set time to do homework every day.
- Regularly check your child's planner to see what has been set and how long it should take. You could help them to plan to fit everything in for the coming week.
- As far as possible, provide a quiet and comfortable place, free from distractions, where your child can concentrate. If this is difficult, contact the College to ask for support.
- Encourage your child to study at a desk or table rather than on the floor or in an easy chair. Discourage distractions such as TV or calls from friends.
- When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers. Doing assignments for your child won't help understanding or help in developing personal self-confidence.
- Read the teacher's comments on assignments that are returned. If a problem comes up, encourage your child to talk to the teacher about it. Alternatively, arrange to talk or meet with the teacher who set the work to plan a solution.
- Make it clear to your child how much you value homework and support the College in explaining how it can help their learning
- Praise and encourage your child when they do their homework as well as they can
- Encourage your child to read as much and as widely as possible.
- Watch for signs of problems or frustration. Problems can be recorded in the student planner or discussed with a teacher.

The following websites are useful sources of information and guidance for students doing homework:

SAMLEARNING

Exam practice with personal feedback, revision materials and homework guidance all feature on this site, which the College pays a license fee for so the students can use it. Students can log in using their own details, by going to

www.samlearning.com and they then log in as follows:

Centre ID: NN2KC

User ID: The student's date of birth and initials with no spaces or punctuation. Eg if my name is John Smith born on 28th Nov. 1988, my user ID is 281188JS.

Password: Same as User ID

Topmarks

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Links to over 1700 useful sites based on UK curriculum requirements.

www.topmarks.co.uk

S-cool

Revision helps and careers advice for young people.

www.s-cool.co.uk

Homework High

Channel 4's site for homework help.

www.homeworkhigh.com

Homework Elephant

An interactive homework site, packed with useful information including subject help, reference help, hints and tips. Part of the National Grid for Learning.

www.homeworkelephant.co.uk

BBC Revision

Suggested learning resources from the BBC.

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/revision

For further information and official guidelines on the setting of homework, parents and carers may be interested to visit the following websites:

[Homework - Parents Centre](#)

Government guidelines on homework, giving a broad indication of how much time students might reasonably be expected to spend on.

<http://www.parentscentre.gov.uk/whatchildrenlearn/learningathomeoutsideschool/ho>

[Teacher Net, Homework](#)

Homework & revision resources

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/homework/>

[Homework helpers - Parents Centre](#)

Help in getting answers to homework questions

<http://www.parentscentre.gov.uk/usingtheinternet/onlineresources/linksbytopic/ho>

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KCC Staff guidance on setting homework

Why is homework important?

Homework provides an opportunity to:

- encourage students to develop the skills, confidence and motivation needed to study effectively on their own. This is vital given the importance for students in the future of life long learning and adaptability;
- consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding developed at College;
- extend College learning, for example through additional reading;
- sustain the involvement of parents and carers in the management of students' learning and keep them informed about the work students are doing
- manage particular demands, such as GCSE course work

There is no legal requirement for schools to provide a set amount of homework for children. However, it is an important means of helping to raise student achievement and every student should see that the College and home are working together in a partnership to provide support and encouragement. It can also enable the College to offer some support beyond the school day.

Homework should be enjoyable for the student, and, if possible, attempt to stimulate imagination and creativity, as well as reinforcing what is taught in the classroom.

Homework provides a means for students:

- To consolidate and reinforce what is learnt in the classroom
- To develop good study habits
- To develop skills in personal organisation and a sense of responsibility
- To prepare for the next stage of education.
- To be supported by parents and carers
- To become independent learners

How much homework should be set each week?

The timings below provide some guidance about how much time students should spend per week. We will not set a specific timetable for each subject. Subjects should set work using these guidelines and parents are being asked to work with their children to spread the load, with guidance and support sought from teachers if needed.

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Government Guidelines on recommended periods of time to be spent on homework at different Key Stages.

Years 7 and 8 45 - 90 minutes per day
Year 9 1 - 2 hours a day

Our parents are being advised that we feel the following amount is appropriate:

- Years 7 and 8 up to an hour per evening.
- Year 9 should do up to one and a half hours per evening.

Recommended homework time at Key Stage 3

The following are College recommendations for weekly amounts per subject

Subject	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	30 minutes	30 minutes	45 minutes
Maths	30 minutes	30 minutes	60 minutes
ICT	30 minutes	30 minutes	30 minutes
Science	30 minutes	30 minutes	60 minutes
Art & Design	30 minutes	30 minutes	45 minutes
Religious Education	30 minutes	30 minutes	45 minutes
Technology	30 minutes	30 minutes	45 minutes
Modern Languages	30 minutes	30 minutes	45 minutes
Geography	30 minutes	30 minutes	45 minutes
History	30 minutes	30 minutes	45 minutes

Government Guidelines recommended for homework time at Key Stage 4:
Years 10 and 11 1.5 - 2.5 hours a day

Our parents are being advised that we feel the following amount is appropriate

- Years 10 to 11 should be taking **up to** two hours per evening.

The following are College recommendations for weekly amounts per subject:

Subject	Year 10	Year 11
English	1 hour	1 hour
Maths	1.5 hours	1.5 hours
Science	1.5 hours	1.5 hours
Options		
ICT	1 hour	1 hour
Religious Education	1 hour	1 hour
Modern Languages	1 hour	1 hour
History	1 hour	1 hour
Geography	1 hour	1 hour
Technology subjects	1 hour	1 hour
Art & Design	1 hour	1 hour
Music	1 hour	1 hour
Drama	1 hour	1 hour
Dance	1 hour	1 hour
Citizenship	1 hour	1 hour
PE	1 hour	1 hour
Applied subjects	1 hour	1 hour

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For Years 12 and 13, up to 2 hours per school day is appropriate (as a minimum expectation) i.e. in the region of 2.5 hours per subject, assuming 4 are taken.

What happens if a student is absent?

Students are expected, wherever possible, to complete homework tasks set in their absence. On returning to College, students should find out what tasks need to be completed and the due date. If necessary the students should discuss with their teacher a later date for the work to be completed.

Recording of homework and homework planners

All homework is to be recorded in the student planner under the supervision of the subject teacher. Details of the homework should be written on the board/OHP etc, well before the end of the lesson, to allow every student in the group time to write the details down.

Tutors will check and sign planners weekly. Tutors and subject teachers will respond to any comments by parents.

Subject teachers will set appropriate tasks using the guidelines provided here as to how much time should be used.

How can we support teaching and learning through homework?

Class teachers have the responsibility to see that homework is completed. Homework also needs to be:

- Specific and differentiated for students at different ages
- Appropriate for the level of ability that the student is working at
- Regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure that it is manageable by student, parents and staff

Management responsibilities/monitoring

Faculty Directors will be responsible for ensuring that policy and guidance is in place for their own areas. They will implement a system for the regular monitoring of how much homework is being set and of what type, providing feedback as appropriate for members of their faculty.

Senior managers will liaise regularly with Faculty Directors to ensure that appropriate work is set regularly, with feedback provided for students on and for their progress. If necessary, they will work with the Faculty Director to produce a plan for improving practice where it is not working effectively.

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Websites available for homework:

There are an increasing number of these. Also, we are intending in the not too distant future to purchase the capacity to run a virtual learning environment, which will transform (potentially and in the long run!) the way we work and set work. However, below are some details of current good and popularly used sites:

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Teachers wanting to use samlearning use the same method, but the user ID and password is simply to type the word teacher in each space provided. You will be able to see usage statistics and track whether your students have done what you have set for them.

Topmarks

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For Students

You are required to have your planner with you at all times. You must complete and hand in homework on time. Subject teachers will contact parents if any student persistently fails to complete homework.

Students are expected, wherever possible, to complete homework tasks set in their absence. If you have been absent, you should find out, on returning to school, what tasks need to be completed and by what date. If necessary, you should discuss with your teacher a later date for the work to be completed.

Work should be completed to the highest standard possible – students will be asked to complete work again that is not up to standard, either at another time or possibly in retaining time/detentions.

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Homework can help you to:

- Review and practice what you have learned;
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- Explore subjects more fully than time permits in the classroom.

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From Year 7 to Year 11, small amounts of homework, gradually increased through the years, may well lead to improved achievement.

Also, in Years 12 and 13 students who complete more homework are likely to achieve better grades, on average, than students who do less. The difference in test scores and grades between students who do more homework and those who do less is likely to increase as children move up through the years.

There is no clear or legal rule about what is the "right" amount. The following is a guideline, though, for students at KCC:

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- Years 9 to 11 should have up to two hours (1½ hours Year 9).
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Amounts that vary from these guidelines will be right for some students, depending, for example, on aptitudes and abilities. Every individual is different. You should talk to your parents/carers and teachers, if you are concerned about either too much or too little homework.

Your parents, or carers, should be able to take an interest in what you are doing and can help you to manage your time. To help, in this respect, you should:

- Agree with your parent/carer on a set time to do homework every day.
- Show your planner to your parent/carer so that they can see what has been set and how long it should take. They can then help you to plan to fit everything in for the coming week and they can help if you feel you are being asked for too much (or too little!)

The following websites are useful sources of information and guidance for students doing homework. There are lots of others, but these are highly recommended:

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