



# DAVENANT FOUNDATION SCHOOL

## HOMEWORK POLICY

Last Review Date: January 2006 (Curriculum Committee)

### PRINCIPLES

- Homework makes a major contribution to students' progress at school. It extends the challenges open to each student and ensures that teaching time is used to maximum effect.
- Whilst homework is not a statutory requirement, the DFES does publish recommendations about the amount of homework that should be set for secondary students:
  - Years 7 and 8: 45 to 90 minutes per day
  - Year 9: 1 to 2 hours per day
  - Years 10 and 11: 1.5 to 2.5 hours per day
  - Years 12 and 13: amount depends on individual programmes
- Homework is seen as an integral part of the school day. In the Home-School Agreement, the school aims to 'set and mark homework on a regular basis according to the homework policy and monitor homework through the use of the students planner'. Parents / carers support the school by, 'monitoring their children's study at home and maintaining contact with the school through the student planner'.

### PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK

Well-organised homework assignments:

- encourage students to become independent learners, developing research and problem solving strategies, and study skills to prepare them for life-long learning;
- give students frequent and increasing opportunities to consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding developed at school;
- extend school 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;
- help students to manage particular demands such as GCSE coursework and revision;
- contribute to higher standards of work and enable students to strive towards targets set.

### APPLICATION OF THE HOMEWORK POLICY

- The Homework Policy is led by Senior Management as part of the school's overall Thinking, Teaching and Learning Strategy.
- There are high expectations of students in completing homework. Work of quality, rather than necessarily quantity, is expected.
- The homework programme is published annually, in September, so that teachers, students and parents/carers know what to expect.

- Teachers will explain tasks set so that students and parents/carers are very clear about what they need to do.
- Homework assignments are carefully planned as integral parts of schemes of work.
- There is consistent practice within and across curriculum areas in setting, managing and marking homework. Individual departments will provide more detailed guidance based on this common framework.
- The school will provide a variety of out-of-class study opportunities for students to participate in.
- Sanctions for unsatisfactory or non completion of homework are administered initially through curriculum areas, with tutor involvement to trace any recurring patterns. Parents / carers will be notified of any serious homework problems.

## **THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS**

Parents / carers can support the school and their child's homework by providing appropriate support as they move through the school. Particularly parents/ carers are encouraged to:

- provide a reasonably peaceful, secure place in which students can do their homework;
- 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;
- sign student planners weekly, and use the planners to communicate with school.

Where parents /carers are concerned about homework issues they should contact the subject teacher, in the first instance, or the tutor in the case of a generic concern.

## **SETTING HOMEWORK**

- To ensure that homework tasks are clearly understood by all students, they should be written on the board well before the end of the lesson.
- Students should write the homework set, along with the due date, in their planners;
- Tasks may need to be broken down into discrete stages to support the less able while extension work, which is not simply more of the same, should be available for students needing extra challenge.
- These strategies must be clearly detailed in schemes of work so that homework is a coherent part of the work being done.
- In setting homework for students with special educational needs, it is important to balance the rights of students to share fully in the work of the class, including homework tasks, with their individual learning needs. These needs may include consolidation and reinforcement of specific skills.
- Teaching Assistants may help further to interpret tasks for students with special educational needs;
- Homework should be marked at least fortnightly.

## **CONTENT OF HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS**

- It is very important that a range of homework types is set and assignments should cover a variety of skills, e.g.

Reading for information	Investigations
Knowledge and understanding	Interviews
Application	Drafting
Pattern finding	Revision
Design	Drawing
Research skills	Designing
Analytical skills	Making models

Tasks must aid the development of the student. It is important that staff set a homework with particular skills in mind and that students are aware of assessment criteria before they complete a homework task.

- Students need to be aware of the standard required; it is beneficial to provide students with sample essay answers or go through a research project, so they are aware of how to extract significant information.
- Homework must be differentiated to allow every student the opportunity to achieve, regardless of ability or band. There will be a range of homeworks written into the workschemes which cater for different needs.
- Students should be given help with study skills by subject staff as well as within tutor periods.
- It is vital that there is liaison between subject staff in the same department, who share a group in order that students do not become overloaded on a particular evening. This will also prevent duplications.

## **HOMEWORK TIMETABLE**

- Homework should be set according to the homework timetable and must be written into schemes of work. If, unusually, homework is not set, the teacher concerned must clearly state the reason for this and students must write it in their student planners. Subject teachers must also keep a diary of homework set in their own planners.
- The homework timetable will ensure that the amount of homework set for students either daily or weekly is consistent and manageable.
- Many students have the additional pressures of extra-curricular activities. Students must have homework set on the appropriate days to enable planning.
- After the homework timetable has been produced, it is vital that staff do not make changes without consultation with Senior Management.
- Parents/ carers will receive a copy of the timetable and students will make a copy in their planners.

## **MONITORING HOMEWORK**

- Tutors must sign student planners on a regular basis. Every planner must be seen and signed each week.
- It is recommended that subject teachers check at least three planners each lesson, to ensure homework has been recorded.
- The planner should be used as a means of communication with parents / carers. If there is a problem with homework completion, it is important that parents/carers are made aware. If a comment has been made by subject teacher, parent or tutor, it is important for the other parties to follow this up.

- Curriculum Co-ordinators and Heads of Year will monitor homework and student planners on a regular basis as part of their job descriptions.
- Subject teachers will monitor the quality and completion of students' homework and apply the School Rewards and Sanctions Policy to homework issues.
- As part of their regular review of students' work, the School Leadership Group will check student planners and exercise books, along with the Head of Subject.
- Homework is an area that will be included in the rolling programme of Subject Area Reviews as part of the whole School Improvement Programme.

### **COURSEWORK (Years 10-13)**

- The coursework schedule will be decided by the appropriate Senior Manager, after consultation with Curriculum Co-ordinators. It is vital that dates are not changed by staff.
- When a coursework deadline is approaching, the teacher who has set the coursework should not also expect the usual homework for that week. To do so would add extra pressure.

### **ICT**

- With the growth in e-learning, staff are encouraged to set some homework tasks which encourage students to use a variety of ICT applications, for research as well as for writing up tasks.
- The method employed should be appropriate to the task, and the time given for the homework.
- It should be remembered that, whilst school surveys show that a large number of students do have access to ICT and / or internet facilities at home, this is not universal. Equal opportunities should be considered at all times.

### **HOLIDAYS**

- While it is not customary for extra homework to be set for holidays, some students will need to use this time to catch up work, or continue with project and coursework. Students will be advised of a minimum amount of reading they should do.
- The usual homework timetable will be followed in the school week preceding holidays.

### **SIXTH FORM**

- Students can expect to do a minimum of five hours' homework or private study per subject per week.
- Students in Year 12 will be given support to acclimatise them to the rigours of 'AS and A' Level. Particular care is taken when more than one member of staff teaches a group to ensure there is no overload.

### **MONITORING THE POLICY**

- The Homework Policy is regularly monitored (at least bi-annually) and evaluated to check that it supports students' learning in the best possible way.

**LINKED POLICIES:**

- Home-School Links Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- ICT Policy