

HOMEWORK POLICY

PREAMBLE

This policy document aims at stating the importance of homework and establishing an agreed framework to which teachers, parents and pupils of our school have contributed. It establishes clear guidelines for teachers and gives information and advice for parents and pupils on how to tackle homework successfully.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HOMEWORK

Homework is a valuable part of schooling. Regular homework gives the pupils the opportunity to supplement and reinforce the work done in school at home. Pupils should revise the contents and practice the skills covered in class in order to progress steadily.

Homework also supports the development of independent learning skills and helps pupils to become more autonomous, that is, more responsible for their own Learning.

Homework also provides parents with an opportunity to take part in their children's education by encouraging and helping them at home to acquire concentration, self-discipline and good habits of study for lifelong Learning.

DEFINITION OF HOMEWORK

Homework is defined as out-of-class tasks assigned to pupils, either as a group or individually, connected to classroom work.

NATURE OF HOMEWORK

Homework can involve practice, preparation, and/or extension assignments. Practice reinforces newly acquired skills. For example, pupils who have just learned a new method of solving a mathematical problem should be given sample problems to complete on their own. Preparation helps pupils get ready for activities that will occur in the classroom. Pupils may, for example, be required to read or do background research on a topic to be discussed later in class. Extension assignments are frequently open-ended tasks that allow pupils to discover on their own and to go deeper on certain areas they may be interested in.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF HOMEWORK

- It should be reasonable in terms of effort and time.
- It should be appropriate to the pupil's skill and knowledge level and age.
- It should contain interesting, varied and challenging tasks.
- It should be purposeful, meaningful and relevant to the school curriculum.
- Rubrics and materials on which homework is based should be clear.
- Deadlines should be clearly stated.

TEACHERS AND HOMEWORK

The nature, frequency and volume of homework set are left to the professional judgement of the teachers. Teachers decide what homework is compulsory for pupils and also suggest optional homework. In any case, homework tasks should be coordinated across teachers in different subjects to avoid unreasonable workloads being placed on pupils. At the beginning of the school year the class teachers will organise a meeting to agree on the homework volume and frequency across the different subjects. The class teachers will propose a homework weekly structure and will communicate it to parents and pupils. The homework weekly structure serves also as a guide for pupils to gain independence and autonomy and to self-regulate their work at home.

Homework must never be used as a punishment. In the same way, not setting homework for a certain period should not be used as a reward.

Teachers will encourage pupils to submit all homework in due time. They will keep accurate records of homework set and submitted. They will assess it timely providing feedback and support.

Homework that is submitted late without any justified reason will have a negative effect on the pupil's A mark. If a pupil is found to plagiarise or cheat the homework grade will be zero. Other disciplinary sanctions may also apply in this case. Teachers, specially language teachers, should make sure that pupils learn how to quote and reference the sources they have used.

GUIDELINES FOR HOMEWORK: VOLUME AND FREQUENCY

We are aware that the working pace of pupils may vary according to many different factors.

The following homework duration is only a rough indication of the time we think an average pupil should spend in his out-of-class tasks in order to progress steadily.

Of course, this time must be used efficiently, being completely focused and without any distractions. If the time that your child spends on his homework is significantly greater, please contact the school.

S1: 45 minutes daily approximately

S2: 60 minutes daily approximately

S3: 60-90 minutes daily approximately

S4: 90-120 minutes daily approximately

S5: 120 minutes daily approximately

S6 and S7: The amount will depend on the pupils' individual programmes.

Note, please, that apart from this, pupils may have to employ some time during the weekends or some extra time during exam periods.

HOW CAN PARENTS GET INVOLVED?

Homework serves to strengthen the partnership between home and school. It provides parents and caregivers with insights as to what is being taught at school. Many of our pupils have already acquired solid study habits at home. They have the initiative to start work and can work independently and may need very little involvement from their parents. However, we would like to offer some tips for parents that can help specially younger children to tackle homework successfully:

- Reinforce the idea of the importance of homework. Set a positive atmosphere around it. Homework should not be a source of stress and conflict in the family.
- Encourage your child to take notes concerning homework assignments in case questions arise later at home. They can use the school diary for that purpose. Check your child's diary.
- Provide a suitable study area and the necessary tools to complete the homework assignments. Pupils should have a quiet room with comfortable furniture, well illuminated and with an adequate temperature, with resources they can use: reference books, dictionaries ...
- Limit after-school activities to allow time for both homework and family activities.
- Agree with your child on a specific homework time. Be careful with the time your children spend television viewing or video-gaming.
- Remind your children to use the computer for homework only when strictly necessary.
- Plan a homework schedule with your child. Allow for free time when assignments are completed.
- Praise your child's efforts.
- If questions arise about the assignments, and your child asks for help, ask him or her questions or work through an example rather than simply providing the answer. Younger children need more parental assistance with homework than older children. Go over homework assignments with your child. Do several problems or questions together, then observe your child doing the next one or two.
- Contact the relevant teacher with any concerns you may have about homework.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUPILS

- Write down all details of homework and deadlines in your school diary. If you are absent to a lesson, make sure you ask a classmate or your teacher about the homework set. Make sure you understand exactly what do and how to do it. Submit assigned work punctually.
- Plan your time so that you do not leave work the last minute having to rush to complete it. Develop an effective individual study timetable.
- If you are using reference books or other sources to complete your assignments, remember to quote properly. Ask your teacher how to do this.
- Do not cut and paste from the Internet. Use your own words and list the sources you have used. Do not plagiarize. Seek assistance from teachers, parents or caregivers when difficulties arise.
- Use your lesson-free periods at school to do homework at the study rooms or the library. Ask the education advisors and the librarian for assistance.
- Ensure that homework is completed to a high standard and is neatly presented.

SCHOOL'S LEARNING SUPPORT AND EXTRA PRIVATE TUITION

The school has also an Educational Support programme in order to help pupils with learning difficulties cope with the requirements of our curriculum. You can get more information about Educational Support programme on the school's website www.escuelaeuropea.org. If you need to contact the Support coordinator please visit the heading Secondary/support coordinator on the website.

The Head
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Escuela Europea de Alicante