

MONIFIETH HIGH SCHOOL



SCHOOL POLICY

HOMEWORK

Endorsed by all staff: September 2006

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Section 1 – Aims of Homework

Homework is considered to be an important part of all courses in Monifieth High School; homework is used for a variety of reasons, all of which contribute to the development and education of the pupils.

The purposes of homework are:

- Practice and consolidation of classwork
- Development of study skills
- Practice in planning and effective use of time
- To strengthen the partnership between home and school
- To allow pupils to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning
- To monitor pupils progress

Section 2 – School Policy on Homework

- **All pupils will be given homework**
- Student planners will be issued to all pupils
- Teaching staff will expect Student Planners to be brought to each lesson
- Pupils are expected to complete homework on time, to the best of their ability
- Subject departments will produce a policy on homework
- Departments will implement, monitor and evaluate their policies
- Parents will be asked to support the school and their child by monitoring their child's homework
- Information about homework will be issued to parents and pupils

Section 3 – What is Homework?

The term homework is used to describe any schoolwork that pupils are expected to complete out of normal class time, usually at home. It includes both work set by the teacher and study carried out by pupils acting on their own initiative. Homework should be related to coursework and appropriate to each pupil's ability. It may or may not be written.

Homework can be any of the following:

- Projects or assignments which may take several weeks
- Completing classwork for the next period the pupil studies the subject
- Reading course material for consolidation
- Researching/collecting material for coursework
- Revising for tests/exams
- 'set' homework exercises for the following week

One of Monifieth High School's aims is to prepare pupils for life after school. Pupils must therefore be encouraged to become independent, life-long learners. This necessitates, as the pupil matures, a gradual shift in the responsibility for learning from the teacher to the student. Homework tasks must reflect this change in emphasis. Although 'set' tasks will still be important for senior pupils, they should also be encouraged to write up notes, summarise key points, etc.

Section 4 – Timing, Quantity and Marking of Homework

All subjects will give **appropriate** homework. However, a number of factors influence the **nature of the homework** given the **amount of time required to complete a task** and the **frequency with which homework is given**.

Variables include: the age / ability of the pupil and the nature of the course being followed

It therefore seems sensible not to **exactly** prescribe **the number of hours** to be spent on homework or **the type or frequency of homework** that pupils should receive from each subject. However, a **guide** relating to nature and frequency of homework and departmental expectations, for specific year groups is issued to pupils and parents at the start of each session.

4.3 **Timing**

If pupils are to develop good study habits it is essential that homework is regular, varied and appropriate. Short-term tasks, e.g. learning vocabulary, looking over notes, must be given often if learning is to be reinforced before the next time the pupil encounters the subject. 'Set homeworks', for instance, a given number of questions, an essay, may be given out one week for completion by the next. Completion of an assignment relating to a project or investigation may well be over a period of two or three weeks.

Teachers are asked to be flexible in setting homework tasks and deadlines, taking into account demands made on pupils by other subjects. Pupils are required to enter **every** type of homework task or subject deadline into their Student Planners, including imminent tests or exams. Parents or guardians are asked to scan the planners on a regular basis and provide appropriate support.

4.4 **Quantity**

It is not possible, as stated earlier, to set prescribed limits, given the variables associated with the progress of the child or the nature of the subject. The following is a rough guide to what, on average, can be expected:

S1	2 to 3 hours per week
S2	3 to 4 hours per week
S3-S4	45 minutes to 1 hour per subject per week
S5-S6	1 ½ to 3 hours per Intermediate / Higher /Advanced Higher subject per week

4.5 **Marking/Evaluation of homework/**

The school places a significant emphasis on peer and self-assessment in order to promote the idea of responsible, active learners. It may be the case that use of assessment rubrics allows pupils themselves or with their peers to evaluate and consider next steps relating to homework tasks. **WRITTEN TASKS THEREFORE DO NOT HAVE TO BE MARKED WHOLLY OR EVEN PARTLY BY THE TEACHER.**

WHAT IS VITAL IS THAT ANY HOMEWORK THAT PUPILS COMPLETE IS CONSIDERED AND PUPILS UNDERSTAND ANY NEXT STEPS REQUIRED WHETHER THIS IS THROUGH PEER/ SELF-ASSESSMENT OR TEACHER FEEDBACK.

Section 5 – The Roles of Teachers, Pupils and Parents

5.1 The Role of Senior Management

- To monitor and evaluate the quality of home-school links in general
- To communicate, monitor and evaluate the school policy on homework and its interconnection with other strategies of communication with parents
- To make Student Planners available to all pupils and monitor their use
- To work with Pupil Care and Support staff, where appropriate, in resolving difficulties associated with the incidence or completion of homework (see Appendix 1)

5.2 The Role of Principal Teacher (Curriculum)

- To develop a curriculum group policy
- To lead the curriculum group in developing a variety and range of homework activities
- To consult with Support for Learning staff
- To ensure that regular non-completion of homework is reported by the department (see Appendix 1)
- To monitor and evaluate the curriculum group homework policy (see Appendix 2)

5.3 The Role of Pupil Care and Support staff

- To respond to requests for help made by pupils, their parents and staff
- To provide appropriate advice to class teachers who refer pupils
- To help pupils within each year group appreciate the value and importance of homework through regular dialogue on the subject and by monitoring of the use of Student Planners
- To assist in the monitoring of the demands of homework on pupils
- To work with parents and Board of Studies on issues relating to significant failure to produce homework (see Appendix 1)

5.4 The Role of Class Teachers

- To set homework for all pupils which is appropriate to their progress and stage of learning in line with school policy and departmental guidelines
- To provide an early notification to parents, via the Student Planners, of any difficulties in the completion of tasks, deadlines, forthcoming tests, test results etc (see Appendix 1)
- To contact House staff, via the Concern or Discipline Referral sheets, to inform them of significant difficulties associated with the completion of homework (see Appendix 1)

5.5 The Role of Pupils

- To complete homework on time, to the best of their ability
- To be entitled to a variety of homework tasks which will be set appropriate to their ability and stage of learning
- To be entitled to receive feedback on homework; this can be in a variety of forms, e.g. verbal, a written comment, or through solutions being available for self-assessment
- To be entitled to sufficient notice and information of tasks set; pupils will be required to record tasks in their Student Planner
- To seek advice at an early stage if experiencing difficulties in completing the task

5.6 The Role of Parents

- To support and monitor their child's use of the Student Planner and to take an interest in the work they are completing at home
- To be afforded an opportunity by the school of an insight into the learning experiences/outcomes that are covered by their child's curriculum
- To participate in a two-way dialogue with the school about their child's learning, for instance, concerns, questions about next steps, praise for achievement, using the Student Planner, parental comments on reports, dialogue with Pupil Care and Support staff, etc.

Section 6 – Study Support

6.1 Additional study support offered by curriculum groups

A number of teachers / curriculum groups offer **voluntarily** either ongoing support for homework / revision and/or targeted support as prelims /the main exam diet approaches. Pupils are made aware of these opportunities verbally by teaching staff and often through notices posted in subject areas. Parents are made aware of these opportunities through a range of approaches: Student Planners; the guide issued on websites /study support; How to Support your Son / Daughter Evenings; the school website and recommendations from Pupil Care and Support staff.

6.2 Study Support Sessions

The school offers Supported Study sessions which are supervised either by a senior member of staff or a volunteer teacher from an appropriate department/curricular group. This facility is for students who have a considerable amount of outstanding work, be it in the form of homework or completion of internally assessed tasks. Parents will be contacted by post if it is felt that students should avail themselves of this resource. (see Appendix 3)

6.3 Library Use

The library is a key resource for pupils undertaking research / investigation. It also houses a significant quantity of revision material for Standard Grade and Higher Still subjects. The library is open every morning from 8.30 to 8.45 a.m., lunchtimes, and from 3.30 to 4.45 p.m on Monday to Thursday. The librarian is happy to support students access information / support material, for example helping students access material which is not housed in the school library or discussing possible, appropriate websites.

6.4 How to Support Your Son/Daughter Evenings

A key ingredient of success is the involvement of parents in supporting their son's/daughter's work at home. For this reason, the school runs three How to Support Son/Daughter evenings. One evening is for S1 parents, one for S3 parents and one for S5/6 parents. The content of the evenings address such issues as: Insights from psychology on how people learn; approaches to homework, assessment and examinations and responsible learning, "early warnings" and study support.(see Appendix 4)

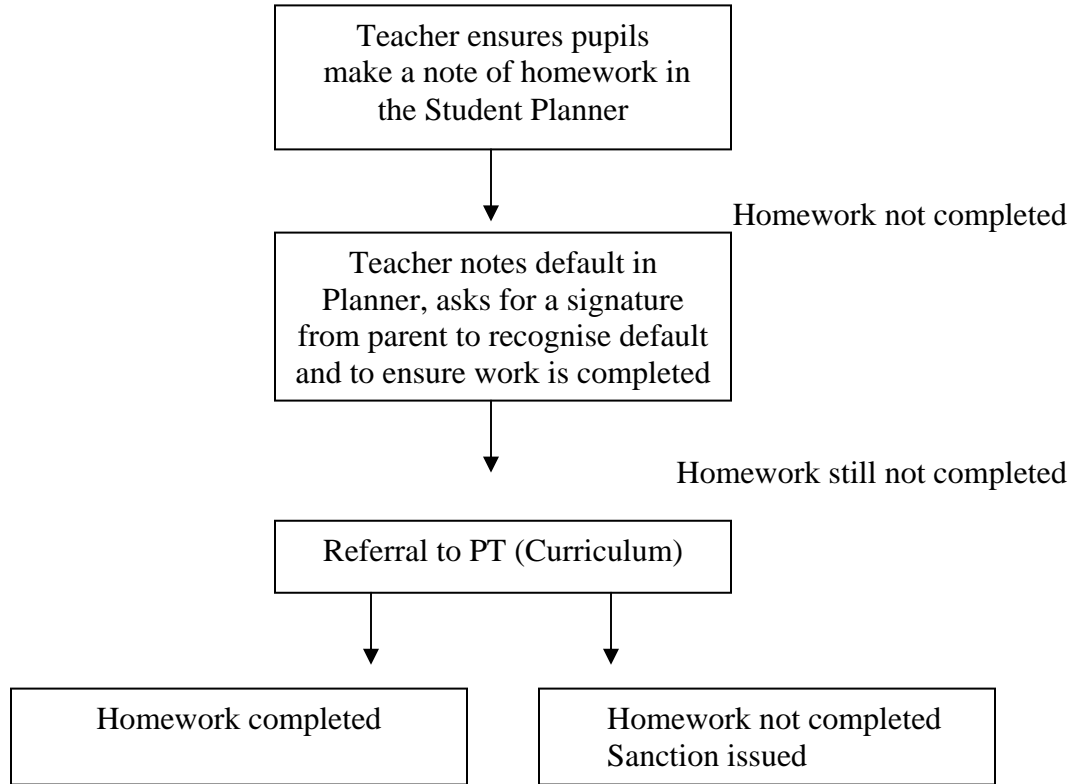
6.5 Information to Parents

A copy of the homework packages and a copy of the Departmental Requirements and Expectations are reviewed annually and issued accordingly.

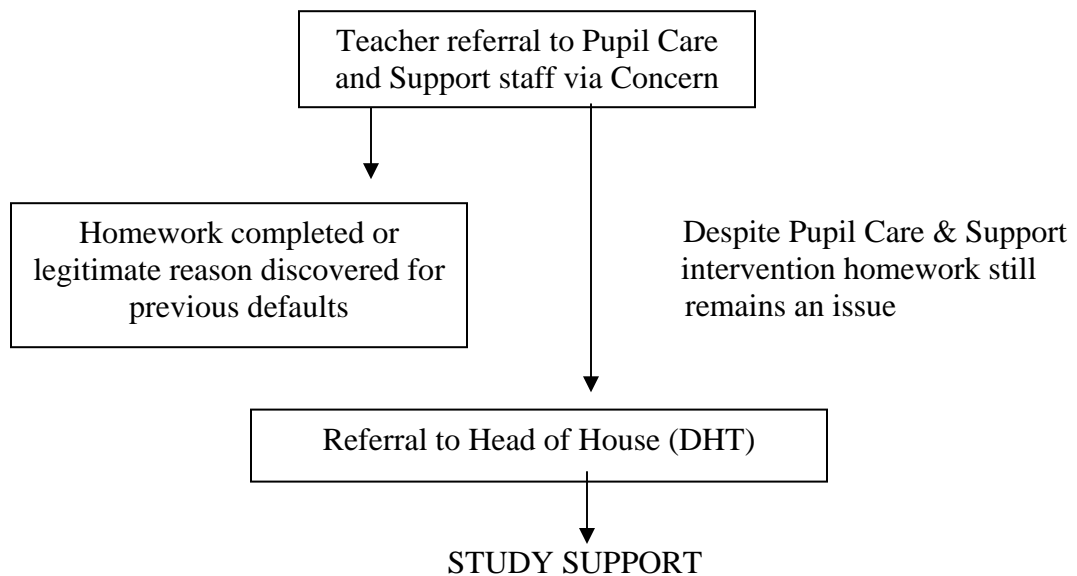
6.6 School Website

**FLOW CHART
(S1 to S4)**

***Action to be taken in the event of
Non-completion of homework***



***Action to be taken in the event of
Repeated non-completion of homework***



MONITORING CURRICULUM GROUP POLICY: QUALITY INDICATORS

The following checklist could be used at any stage to identify the steps needed to improve the quality of homework in a Curriculum Group or individual course.

Course:					
Complete the chart below by, in the appropriate column, indicating the present position by a tick, and the position you hope to reach by the end of this session by a cross	Not practice	Under review	Being developed	Almost developed	Current practice
	Principles				
A homework scheme is available for the course					
Homework is closely related to class work					
Homework tasks involve a variety of activities					
Homework tasks are differentiated					
Support for Learning has been consulted where appropriate					
All homework is purposeful and useful					
Teachers are aware of other subject demands through consulting Student Planners					
Parents are kept informed					
Practice					
There are clear instructions for issuing....etc.					
Pupils are given adequate notice					
Tasks are issued in written form					
Pupils are told how long a task should take					
Solutions are available where appropriate					
Individual homework is checked by an appropriate method					
Teachers keep a homework record					