



Birchwood High School Homework Policy

At Birchwood, we place strong emphasis upon the importance of homework throughout all years within the school. We see homework as a vital part of the pupils' learning experience, enhancing attainment and ensuring that strong foundations are laid within the early stages of the curriculum to aid progression and development into certificated courses and beyond. Homework is seen as an important way in which student achievement can be raised.

The underlying principles of the Birchwood High homework policy are to:

- enable students to understand that *independent learning* is vital to achieving success;
- give every student the opportunity to develop their knowledge, creativity and resourcefulness through *perseverance*;
- instil in all students the *importance of life-long learning*;
- provide training for students in *planning and time management*;
- promote *responsibility* for learning within each student;
- promote *self-esteem* through regular accomplishments, which aids students' mental and physical health;
- promote consistency across the school to ensure that teachers and pupils are aware of what is expected of them;
- engage parents in the homework process.

Our aims

We believe in offering our students a broad and balanced curriculum that will enhance their skills and prepare them for work beyond school. Homework is not restricted to certain subject areas and must reflect the breadth and balance of the curriculum.

At Birchwood, we aim to provide:

- homework that is easily accessible through an online platform, currently Satchel One (Show my Homework)
- homework that is carefully planned and which deepens or develops class work: it is not seen as a dispensable extra;
- homework that matches the needs and abilities of students;
- homework that promotes opportunities for consolidation and extension;
- homework that is related to current work and where possible, is stimulating and challenging;
- homework opportunities that are issued to all year groups and in all subjects;
- feedback on homework that is constructive; pupils should receive recognition for their effort and work well done.

Homework may include activities such as:

Practice exercises – providing students with the opportunities to apply new knowledge, or review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, including:

- consolidation exercise e.g. maths, including memorisation of tables;
- practising for mastery e.g. spelling words or building vocabulary;
- revising information about a current topic;
- practising words or phrases learned in a language other than English;
- reading for pleasure;
- essay writing.

Preparatory homework – providing opportunities for students to gain background information on a unit of study so that they are better prepared for future lessons, including:

- Background reading;
- Reading e.g. an English text for class discussion;
- Researching topics for a class unit of work;
- Collecting items e.g. geometric shapes.

Extension assignments – encouraging students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively, including:

- writing e.g. a book review;
- making or designing something e.g. art work;
- investigations e.g. science, social science;
- researching e.g. history, local news;
- information and retrieval skills e.g. using a home computer to find material on the internet;
- monitoring e.g. advertising in particular newspapers.

The school, however, will have regard for equity issues when setting homework that relies upon the use of technology. Students who do not have access to such technology at home should not be disadvantaged. Homework support sessions are offered after school in the school library or in our Personalised Learning Centre.

Please note that some students may be offered a reasonable adjustment or alternative to their Homework provision in response to their significant learning difficulties. This will be coordinated by the SENCO or relevant staff with responsibility for SEN provision.

Students' role

Students will be encouraged to recognise the value of homework, and made fully aware of its capacity to improve their learning. Students should seek appropriate support from their teacher and ask questions to ensure that they are able to complete tasks set for homework in good time and certainly before the due date.

Students are responsible for completion of homework to the best of their ability and on time. It is the student's responsibility to catch up with homework missed due to absence. All homework tasks should be accessed through the schools chosen online platform.

Students who do not complete their homework should expect to receive a sanction in line with the Choices and Consequences chart outlined in the Behaviour Policy.

Parent/Carer's role

At Birchwood, we recognise that parental involvement in homework has a powerful influence on achievement.

Parents/ carers can help students succeed with by monitoring homework provision through the schools chosen online learning platform , supporting students to manage and complete their homework and raising any issues with form tutors or subject teachers.

Parents should also help students succeed through clear messaging

- *Homework is an important part of school:* parents/carers should expect students to complete homework and hand it in when it is due. Holding students accountable for homework builds responsibility and time management skills. Parents/carers should support the school behaviour system when their child has failed to meet expectations around homework.
- *Parental support will be provided as needed.* Students are less likely to become discouraged or frustrated when parents/carers offer encouragement and assure them that help is available when they get stuck. For some students, it is helpful just to have a parent/carers nearby while they work.
- *Parents/carers will not do homework for their students.* This message lets students know that the parent/carers role is to encourage and to help them get unstuck, while at the same time communicating that homework is designed to help students to master skills that parents/carers may have already attained.

If parents / cares have a concern over homework they should, in the first instance, contact the specific subject teacher concerned to address this.

Subject Teachers' role

- Teachers are responsible for setting, recording, marking and returning homework.
- Teachers are also responsible for ensuring that homework tasks are available on the school's chosen online platform.
- Homework should be issued in appropriate quantities and frequency, as agreed in the timetable within this policy.
- Completion dates should be both clear and reasonable, taking account of home environment and extracurricular activities of students, including family and cultural obligations.
- Tasks are best set during the lesson rather than at the end, so there is enough time for all students to ask questions to clarify what they have to do.
- Tasks should be adapted where necessary and a variety of tasks should be set over time to develop different skills.
- Teachers must ensure that students are adequately prepared for the completion of tasks set.

Feedback on homework is a crucial aspect of learning and can take many forms. It is not always appropriate for all homework tasks to be marked by the teacher but there should always be some appropriate feedback. Some homework may be peer assessed to enhance pupil understanding and encourage discussion. Teachers must allow students time to respond to homework marking comments as part of the assessment process.

Teachers should follow up non-completion of Homework by using Choices and Consequences Chart, setting detentions and contacting parents/carers as appropriate.

Teachers should use their professional judgement in pursuing instances of persistent non-compliance and consult with their HOF and/or Heads of Year

Parents/carers will be informed of persistent non-completion of homework.

Quality assurance

The frequency, quality and nature of homework will be regularly monitored by the relevant Heads of Faculty. Any concerns or issues will be addressed by the Head of Faculty with relevant subject teachers.

Form Tutor's will monitor homework indicators on our online platform, and address any concerns, liaising with their Head of Year.

Frequency of Homework

Homework should be set for each subject following the guidelines outlined below.

Minimum expectations for setting Homework

Years 7 & 8

1 homework set per week per class for English, Maths, Science
1 homework set per fortnight per class for all other subjects (see exceptions below)
1 homework set every 3 weeks per class for RS, Drama, Music, Art
No homework set for core PE or PSHCE

This would equate to an average of 12 pieces of Homework per fortnight per student

Years 9, 10 & 11

1 homework set per week per class for English, Maths, Science
1 homework set per fortnight per class for all other subjects
No homework set for core PE or PSHCE

This would equate to 13 pieces of homework per fortnight per student in Year 9
This would equate to 10 pieces of homework per fortnight per student in Year 10 & 11

Years 12 & 13

2 homework pieces set per week per class (note, the vast majority of classes at KS5 are split between 2 teachers, so this would ordinarily equate to 1 per teacher)

This would equate to 12 pieces of homework per fortnight for students studying 3 subjects

All homework should be set using Satchel One (Show My Homework) across all Key stages.

A homework report will be produced via SACHEL for every 2-week cycle and circulated to HOFs/ KSC/ HODs (this will commence from start of October, given September complications!)

Where classes are split, it is expected that relevant teachers will liaise on who is responsible for setting homework for a particular class, ensuring HOF / KSC/ HOD are aware of this

In the case of projects, if setting these please ensure there are setting and checking points on SACHEL, as per the expected cycle