

LOSSIEMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL



Homework Policy
November 2020

Rationale

Introduction for families to homework

Parents, carers and other family members can and do make a real difference to children's education. When parents and schools work together in partnership, children perform better. Children learn a great deal at school. Families can add to that by supporting learning at home. Showing an interest in their homework and talking to them about it really helps them to learn.

Why is homework important? What are the purposes of our homework?

- to help children practise and build on what has been learned in school
- to enable children to learn how to organise and manage their time
- to encourage children to take increasing responsibility for their own learning and study skills
- to develop confidence to deal with frustrations, overcome difficulties and solve problems
- to learn and work independently in the future
- to prepare for future learning and assessment
- to provide opportunities for enrichment of work done in school
- to provide further opportunities for home involvement and support
- to raise attainment

Homework helps teachers to check a child's understanding of classwork and keep track of their progress. It lets you find out what your child is doing at school and get involved in their learning.

As a learner, why should you complete homework?

You should complete homework because it

- can prepare you for the next part of the course
- is another way to help you to learn
- makes sure that you understand the class work
- helps you to develop good study skills
- gives you the opportunity to try by yourself the type of questions which are asked in examinations. This trains you in examination technique
- reinforces and tests again your understanding of work which you have previously studied in the course

What are the LHS Principles Underlying Homework?

All of us in the school, pupils, parents/carers and teachers have responsibilities. Our shared approach must be consistent and positive.

In the BGE (Broad General Education S1 to S3) stage, homework helps learners to continue developing the independent learning skills learned about in primary school. It also prepares learners for the senior phase, when much of the responsibility for managing workload for exam courses will be down to each pupil to manage effectively.

In both the senior and the BGE phase, homework helps to reinforce subject learning. It also develops skills such as thinking, planning, organisation, prioritising and coping with workload expectations.

All of these are transferable, real-life skills that will be of benefit to learners in their adult lives.

Homework

- will be issued to all year groups, in all subjects and to all learners
- will be posted on Satchel One (previously Show my Homework) for pupils in S1 and S2, so that all learners and families can access this at home. The post will also state clearly when the homework is to be handed in. A minimum of one week should be allowed for homework to be completed
- will be posted on Microsoft Teams (to be accessed via Glow accounts) for all pupils in S3 upwards
- for S1 and S2 pupils will be posted on Teams from August 2022
- must be clearly understood by the learner

- must be relevant to the needs of the individual learner
- feedback on homework must be constructive. Learners must be given recognition for their effort and work done well
- 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 all homework will be assessed. Some homework may be peer assessed to enhance pupil understanding and encourage discussion

Types of Homework

Homework tasks must reflect on-going class work across the curriculum. Homework is not just the completion of written tasks. Below you will find some examples but these examples are not exhaustive:

Practice exercises

Providing learners with the opportunities to apply new knowledge, or review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills including:

- Consolidation exercises e.g. maths, including memorisation of tables
- Practising for mastery e.g. spelling words
- Going over what is currently being taught in class
- Practising words or phrases learned in a language other than English
- Practising new skills e.g. Physical Education, musical instruments or Reading for pleasure
- Essay writing

Preparatory homework

Providing opportunities for learners to gain background information on a unit of study so that they are better prepared for future lessons, including:

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

Extension assignments

Encouraging learners to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively, including:

- Writing e.g. a book review
- Making or designing something e.g. a piece of 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

In setting homework we must have regard for equality issues. Not all learners have home access to a computer or a smartphone; nor are there the same library facilities in communities that there once were. Learners should be encouraged to use school facilities but we also have to be aware that some need to travel home by bus and cannot stay beyond 3.40 pm. However, there is a homework club in the school library every Wednesday with teaching staff available. In addition some subjects run homework clubs at lunch times.

Time to be spent on Work at Home

These suggestions act only as a guide to the amount of time learners should be spending at home on work for school.

In the BGE phase it is reasonable to expect that a young person in S1 and S2 might be spending between 45 minutes and an hour four or five times a week.

In S3 of the BGE phase this might rise to 1½ to 2 hours four or five times a week, depending on the courses the young person is following. Each day pupils should work on three or four subjects in this time.

In the Senior Phase the level of work required will vary from subject to subject; this will also depend on the level of the course:

- a Level (or National) 4 course will require the same amount of time as an S3 course
- at Level (or National) 5 most courses will require 2 hours per week; some practical courses will require less time because of the nature of the work
- at Level 6 (or Higher) each course will require 3 hours a week
- a Level 7 (or Advanced Higher) course will require a very significant level of study, be it reading, working in a laboratory or writing a paper. Time is provided within the school day for some of this but there will be considerable work outside the school to the same extent as will be required to succeed in a Year 1 university course

Frequency of Homework across Subjects

In the first two years of secondary school learners will see many subject teachers for only one period per week. There is not a requirement for weekly homework in every subject, perhaps even in any subject.

As a rule of thumb it is realistic to expect one significant piece of homework approximately every 8 lessons. In this way 1 period a week subjects would issue one piece of homework each term, while in other subjects with 3 or 4 lessons a week, a significant exercise could be set at least once a fortnight.

In S3 one piece of homework per fortnight is to be expected.

In the Senior Phase every subject will have some form of homework every week.

Non-Completion of Homework

Homework has a significant part of play in the pupils' learning. There are therefore consequences in cases where a learner with no genuine explanation fails to submit homework:

- Failure to complete homework is entered in SEEMiS as a homework demerit and the office staff notify families each day
- The pupil still has an opportunity to submit the homework the following day
- If homework is not brought in the next school day to the class teacher, he/she would inform the PT (subject). The PT (subject) would consider each pupil individually and decide
 - a) to give the pupil a warning and to keep this at departmental level if e.g. it was the first time this had happened
 - or
 - b) to advise PT(Guidance) who would be able to identify if a pattern might be emerging in terms of a pupil's lack of homework across several subjects or within a particular subject
- If a referral is made to the PT(G), Guidance will contact home outlining the concern and discuss with the family the reason(s) why homework is not completed. The PT(G) will feedback to PT/class teacher through SEEMIS
- If the matter is not resolved, or a pupil consistently fails to return/complete homework, the PTGs may seek a meeting with the family to discuss concerns
- If the family does not support the school with homework completion or there is no improvement in the situation, parents will be invited in to sign a disclaimer regarding the school homework policy.