

Hitchin Girls' School Homework Policy



Date of issue: September 2023

Trust Board approval: September 2023

Review date: September 2026

Aspiration Perseverance Kindness Respect Positivity

Community - Family - Relationships

Rationale

Educational research suggests that homework has a positive impact on pupil progress (average +5 months), particularly with pupils in secondary schools.

At Hitchin Girls' School, homework is used:

- to enable students to undertake independent learning
- to reinforce learning in the classroom
- to practise and consolidate skills
- to prepare students for future learning
- for revision
- to encourage curiosity and wider reading/learning
- to conduct in-depth inquiry and research skills
- to encourage students to develop organisational skills and manage their time effectively

Frequency & Organisation

Expected frequency of homework is outlined below.

Key Stage 3: Up to one hour per week for English, Maths and Science; up to 30 minutes per week for other subjects. Advice should be given to students on how long they should spend on a task.

Key Stage 4: Students should aim to complete a minimum of one hour of study per subject per week. This can include homework that has been set by the teacher, but should also include independent study/revision. Suggestions of where students can access additional home learning resources can be found in the subject specific policies (see Appendix A). There is no limit to homework set, but staff need to be aware of pressure points on the calendar. Advice should be given to students on how long they should spend on a task.

Key Stage 5: Students should complete five hours of study per subject per week. This includes timetabled study periods.

There is no blanket policy on the setting of homework which applies to all year groups and subjects in the school. Different departments have their own established systems in setting homework in their own specialist areas which enable students to make the best possible progress. Students should expect to receive some form of feedback to homework tasks, but the type of feedback can vary depending on task type. More detailed information about subject specific homework policies can be found in Appendix A. This is in line with our Assessment & Feedback policy.

The school utilises Google Classroom to set all homework tasks. Students access Google Classroom throughout their time in school and are familiar with the platform. All homework should be set with a due date to allow students to make use of the 'to do list' to organise their workload.

Parents and carers are able to receive Guardian Summaries via email on either a daily or weekly basis. The email summaries include:

- Missing work - work that's late at the time the email was sent
- Upcoming work - work that's due today and tomorrow (for daily emails) or work that's due in the upcoming week (for weekly emails)
- Class activity - announcements, assignments, and questions recently posted by teachers

It is important to recognise that parents and carers will not be able to access or login to Google Classroom. The Guardian Summaries simply come as an automated email, but contain all of the information needed to support your child at home.

We have a shared responsibility when it comes to home learning:

Teachers will...

- Only set homework when it is appropriate and purposeful.
- Set homework as an assignment on Google Classroom with a due date.
- Be clear about the purpose of the homework task and how it will support student learning.
- Ensure that homework tasks are accessible to all students.
- Ensure sufficient time is provided to allow completion of homework, including over school holidays.
- Be mindful of students' additional commitments, both in and out of school, when setting deadlines.
- Provide appropriate feedback according to the department's assessment and feedback policy.
- Praise and reward students for excellent efforts when it comes to the completion of homework tasks.
- Record a homework notification for any late/incomplete homework to alert parents and allow for internal monitoring.

Parents are encouraged to...

- Assist their child with planning and organising their homework. The Guardian Summaries can be used to support this.
- Provide their child, where possible, with a suitable learning environment in which to complete their homework without distractions.
- Discuss homework tasks and teacher feedback to encourage conversations about learning.
- Monitor rewards and consequences related to homework completion.
- Email the class teacher if there are any reasons why homework can't be completed.

Students should...

- Use Google Classroom daily to check for homework tasks.
- Allow adequate time to complete homework to a standard that reflects their understanding and best efforts.
- Where possible, find a quiet environment to complete homework.
- Take initiative for their own learning, exploring and developing their understanding beyond the tasks set.

Homework Club

We understand that some students may not have a quiet space for homework and that some students may need additional support to complete homework tasks. We offer a daily homework club in the main hall at lunch time and in the library after school to help overcome these barriers.

Appendix A: Subject Specific Overviews

Ancient Civilisation, Ancient History, Classical Civilisation

Homework is set every 3 - 4 lessons at Key Stage 3, every 2 - 3 lessons at Key Stage 4 and every lesson at Key Stage 5. At Key Stage 5, this will usually be a 'pre-learning' task.

All homework is set on Google Classroom, in line with whole school expectations. Homework can take many forms, but common types of homework include the use of Massolit at Key Stage 5, revision, exam-style question practice, pre-learning/pre-reading and research.

When assessed homework is marked, students should expect to receive feedback on the spelling of key names, a target for improvement will be set and reward points will be issued as appropriate.

For any students wishing to access additional home learning, we recommend the use of Massolit, Omnibus articles, Cambridgescp.com and visiting museum websites.

Art, Craft and Design

Homework is set at least once a fortnight at Key Stage 3 and weekly at Key Stage 4 and 5. Homework tasks tend to be a mixture of practical and research based tasks, designed to support/extend project learning and skills/understanding in the subject. Some homework tasks, especially at Key Stage 5, will be bespoke to individuals as they work on their individual projects.

At Key Stage 3, homework (set fortnightly as minimum) will be assessed by way of teacher comment, identifying strengths and a target area to improve. Level assessed classwork/homework is set at least once a half term, focusing on a key assessment objective.

At Key Stage 4 and 5, homework (set weekly as minimum) will be assessed by way of teacher comment, identifying strengths and a target area to improve. Most homework tasks will contribute towards a sustained presentation to be grade assessed, as per the tracking sheet on Go4Schools (except in Year 11 and Year 13, where NEA restrictions do not allow).

For students wishing to access additional home learning, we offer the Arts Award from bronze to Gold Level as an extra-curricular qualification. We also run a number of clubs for all Key Stages both at lunch and after school.

Business Studies

KS4 - Once a week (30 mins to 1 hour)

KS5 - Students should complete five hours of study per subject per week. One to two hours of these will be directed by teachers, but the remaining time should be spent on independent study.

Homework tasks are often linked to prior or future learning. A task could be set to check how well they have understood the content covered in class, but a common approach, particularly at KS4 and KS5, is to use flipped learning, where students are introduced to the learning material before class with classroom time then being used to deepen

understanding. Exam practice questions are also commonly set as homework tasks. Students may also be set revision based homework tasks using Seneca.

Homework is usually marked at the start of the lesson. This is usually self-marked, but teachers will support this to check understanding and spot errors. This self-marking should be completed in a different colour pen. Teachers may then check these responses and provide additional verbal feedback either in class or via mote.

For any students wishing to access additional home learning, we recommend the use of online material, including Seneca, Bitesize and Tutor2u.

Computing

KS3 - Once a fortnight (30 mins)

KS4 - Once a week (30 mins to 1 hour)

KS5 - Students should complete five hours of study per subject per week. One to two hours of these will be directed by teachers, but the remaining time should be spent on independent study.

Homework tasks (particularly at Key Stage 3) are usually linked to prior or future learning. A task could be set to check how well they have understood the content covered in class, but a common approach, particularly at KS4 and KS5, is to use flipped learning, where students are introduced to the learning material before class with classroom time then being used to deepen understanding through discussion with peers and problem-solving activities facilitated by teachers.

Homework is usually marked at the start of the lesson. This is usually self-marked, but teachers will support this to check understanding and spot errors. This self-marking should be completed in a different colour pen. Teachers may then check these responses and provide additional verbal feedback either in class or via mote.

For any students wishing to access additional home learning, we recommend the use of online material, including Seneca, Bitesize and Craig and Dave videos.

Design & Technology

In KS3 homework is set once every two weeks. This may be set as a "Mini project" spanning a number of weeks but it still works out as once every two weeks.

In KS4, homework is set every week. The duration of the task may differ but students are expected to spend around an hour a week outside of lessons on homework.

In KS5, homework is set every week and students are expected to spend between 4 & 5 hours on independent study outside of lessons.

In KS3, pre-recorded podcasts are used for homework in Product Design. Students listen to the podcast which covers an area looked at in class to cement their knowledge and to complete a worksheet activity. In KS5, theory videos are set as homework, so students get a "Mini lesson" to follow and then answer example questions linked to the subject area.

As a department we use Exampro to create assessments through KS4 & 5. This tool is very useful to set mini quizzes as homework and then go through the mark scheme in the following lesson.

Google Rubrics are being used more in D&T as teachers understand the power of them. In KS3 these Rubrics are used to assess mini homework projects. The assessment criteria is written so that students are fully aware of how they have been successful and what they need to do to improve. We have found that these Rubrics encourage students to improve their work and re-upload their work for higher marks.

Feedback to homework tasks might be provided in workbooks if this is where the homework has been completed. If homework tasks form part of a larger assessment, these will be marked against assessment criteria or a mark scheme provided by the exam board. Teachers are encouraged to provide an area for celebration and an area for improvement on the front of any assessments which are completed outside of the classroom. Some homework tasks may be peer assessed, if appropriate.

For any students that would like to access additional home learning tasks, we would recommend the following:

YouTube – Hitchin D&T channel for videos on how to use CAD programme Sketchup and watch theory videos covering GCSE and A-Level content.

BBC Bitesize – AQA Design & Technology GCSE / A-Level

Technologystudent.com

The Design Museum education section

Drama

Y7 are not set homework in drama.

Homework in Y8 & 9 is set several times a term, depending on the topic.

At Key Stage 4 & 5, homework is set as appropriate, to support and contribute to the particular component they are working on.

Homework will generally be research based note making, line learning, recording devising decisions or formal essays. BBC Bitesize is the only platform regularly used although at A Level we use Digital Theatre and the NT to access recorded performances.

Written homework is marked on Google Classroom and notes on practical work added to the comments.

For any students that would like to access additional home learning tasks, Key Stage 5 students could complete wider reading of textbooks and plays. At GCSE, we provide revision booklets from the start of the course that they can work on. We encourage all students to attend live theatre visits, but where this is not possible, digitally recorded versions are available. External drama groups are also recommended.

English & Media

Homework in English is set in line with the whole school homework guidance (see below). However, it is not expected that homework is set every week if it is not relevant.

Key Stage 3: Up to one hour per week

Key Stage 4: No limit to homework set, but teachers will be considerate of pressure points on the calendar. Advice is also given to students on how long they should spend on a task, where appropriate.

Key Stage 5: Students should complete five hours of additional study per week.

Homework will vary from reading and research to longer, extended writing depending on what is appropriate. All homework is set on Google Classroom and it is made clear whether or not it should be submitted there or in person. It is expected that all teachers have a homework topic at the top of their Google Classroom. Students are expected to write HW in the margin when submitting homework in their exercise books.

The type of feedback given for homework tasks is dependent on the task set. It is not expected that all homework is marked by the teacher.

Feedback could take the form of:

- verbal (in person or using Mote)
- guided self-assessment
- formal teacher marking (either on GC or on paper)
- quizzes, summaries and informal Q/A are all valid methods for teachers to check reading homework.

For any students wishing to access additional home learning, we recommend the following:

KS3 and KS4: BBC Bitesize

KS4: Exam board specific study guides and set text study guides

KS5: Exam board specific study guides and set text study guides

KS5 English: Massolit

We recommend wider reading to all year groups and encourage the use of the library and Accessit.

Geography

Homework is set as and when appropriate.

A revision based homework will always be set prior to an assessment, following a revision lesson that is built into the end of each unit of work.

At Key Stage 3 all students complete an assessed homework project, based on 9 criteria. This is usually one per year. These are set on Google Classroom and students are given a set period of time to complete them.

eRevision is a digital platform we use regularly to set homework at Key Stage 4. Exam-style questions are used frequently for homework tasks at both Key Stage 4 & 5.

Research/pre-reading based homework is often used at Key Stage 5.

For homework tasks set on Google Classroom, teachers will provide either online written feedback or verbal feedback via mote. Exam questions are typically marked by teachers using examination mark schemes, but on some occasions might be peer or self-assessed. Feedback provided will either be written or verbal, depending on the nature of the feedback.

Whole-class feedback is often more appropriate for research or pre-reading tasks and lesson starters are used to discuss these homework tasks and answer any questions that have arisen.

For any students that would like to access additional home learning tasks, there are a selection of suggested materials and websites on the [Geography Google site](#). (Students will need to use their HGS email account to access this site).

History

Homework is usually set once each week on google classroom. For Key Stage 3, this should take around 30 minutes. At KS4, this should take around 1 hour. At Key Stage 5, students should complete five hours of study per subject per week. Mote is sometimes used to provide feedback

Homework tasks include: researching historical events or figures, extending classroom learning through developing or extending classwork further. Sometimes homework involves researching/ preparing for new learning. KS4 and KS5 homework usually involves wider reading/ note making to consolidate learning or exam preparation/ revision or note consolidation activities. Sometimes homework involves independent learning such as wider reading e.g. articles

Homework is set on google classroom for all key stages.

Feedback on homework tasks is provided via google classroom. This may be provided verbally using mote or written comments may be given.

For any students wishing to access additional home learning, a website list is provided on google classroom and on assessment feedback sheets. We also have a [history department website](#) which has extension tasks/wider reading and past papers.

KS3 PE

Homework is not set in PE at Key Stage 3.

KS4 PE & Dance, KS5 PE

Homework is set at least every other lesson. Typical homework tasks include reading and research, preparing presentations, answering exam style questions, completing online activities and preparing revision material (re-worked notes, revision cards, online revision activity, etc.).

All homework is checked. Tasks can be given dot, tick or star. Exam style questions are peer, self or teacher marked using exam criteria and a mark is returned to students.

We encourage Key Stage 5 students to engage with PE review magazines in the library/online.

Latin

At Key Stage 3, homework is set every 2-3 weeks. They have 2 weeks to complete each H/W and it's mostly revision based.

At Key Stage 4, homework is set weekly. Students are expected to learn chunks of the GCSE vocabulary list each week and are assessed on these. They are also given advance notice of stage assessments (outlined above), so that they have 2 weeks to complete the revision in preparation for this.

Homework at KS5 is ongoing. They are set rolling two-week homework tasks that will

usually include learning vocabulary, completing grammar exercises and working with unseen translations, as well as regular revision of literature texts..

Most feedback on homework is written feedback. GCSE and A-level descriptors are used to mark homework and these are shared with students. Targets are set for each marked piece of homework. Verbal feedback may be provided using mote where homework is submitted electronically.

For any students wishing to access additional home learning, we recommend Key Stage 3 & 4 students use the Cambridge SCP website, which provides access to vocabulary & grammar activities & wider website links based on the background areas covered. At Key Stage 5, we recommend students complete further practice sentences from the Latin Language textbook and exam board past papers.

Learning for Life

Homework is not set in Learning for Life. However, most lessons contain a 'where to find more information or support' slide to provide students with access to further reliable sources of information should they wish to find out more about a topic.

Mathematics

Homework is set once a week at Key Stage 3, once or twice a week at Key Stage 4 and after every lesson at Key Stage 5.

A wide range of approaches to homework tasks are used across the department and tasks are selected, as appropriate by the class teacher. However, common homework tasks include the use of MyMaths and Dr Frost maths, where automated feedback is used. Homework completed in exercise books is usually peer marked in the following lesson, but the teacher may decide to collect homework in and provide more detailed feedback, where appropriate.

For any students wishing to access additional home learning, students can find a list of suggested tasks/websites on their Google Classroom.

Modern Foreign Languages

Homework can be set once a week at Key Stage 3 and this should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Homework can be set at least once a week at Key Stage 4 and this should take approximately 40 minutes to complete. At Key Stage 5, homework is set by teachers across the consortium, in line with consortium expectations.

Homework tasks vary within the department, but typically focus on short writing tasks and reading/listening comprehensions. We also use digital platforms for homework setting, including Pearson Active Learn and Language Gym.

Some productive homework will receive written feedback from the teacher, but homework set via a digital platform will receive immediate automated feedback.

For any students wishing to access additional home learning, we recommend accessing the additional materials on Active Learn or Language Gym.

Music

Key Stage 3: 1 per half term (once every six weeks)

Key Stage 4: 1 hour per every hour lesson in school.

Key Stage 5: 1 hour per every hour lesson in school plus wider research & instrumental practice.

At KS3, homework tasks tend to be research based. At GCSE and A-level, homework will usually be a listening task or essay based practice. Research/pre-reading (flipped learning) based homework is also used at KS4 & 5.

Homework feedback is given on google classroom, where it is usually expected that students submit their homework. If, at GCSE & A Level, essays are handwritten (which is what we encourage in order to be realistic with time pressures in exams), written feedback is provided.

Outside of lessons, we encourage students to practise their instruments and attend extra-curricular clubs. However, if students would like to complete additional home learning tasks, extensions on practical work and research based tasks can be provided.

Philosophy & Ethics

KS3 - around once per half term.

KS4 (Core) - none set

KS4 (GCSE option) - every lesson

KS5 - every lesson

Homework for GCSE and A-level will always consist of a revision based activity. Following each lesson, students are asked to add a slide to a deck of google slides summarising the learning of the lesson, so that by the end of the topic each student has a deck of revision slides. These revision based homework tasks are not marked, but are checked for completion.

A bank of extra-curricular resources and suggestions for additional home learning are provided for students at Key Stage 4.

At Key Stage 5, we encourage students to undertake wider reading in the subject. A resource bank is provided on Google Classroom and students can access additional materials via the department library in W90.

Science

Homework is set as outlined below:

KS3 - Up to one hour a week

KS4 - No limit to homework set but advice is given to students on how long to spend on a task

KS5 - Students should complete five hours of study per week.

Common types of homework tasks include: quizzes using the Educake platform; practical write-ups; research tasks; calculation tasks; revision activities as signposted on the Google Classroom; past paper questions and drawing graphs.

For homework tasks set on digital platforms, they will receive immediate, automated feedback. Other types of homework may be marked in class, by self or peer marking, or by the teacher (eg verbal feedback). Feedback may be given to homework tasks on the Google Classroom, and this is increasingly the case.

For any students wishing to access additional home learning, we recommend completing past paper questions available on the OCR website.

Additionally, further videos, details, links, simulations and other resources can be found on Google Classroom lesson posts, which are posted by all staff as they progress through their schemes of work. Youtube also has a large amount of useful material. Additional information and resources can be found on our science Google Sites.

Social Sciences

Homework is set regularly, but this is not always a new, unique task, it is frequently a review of the lesson's learning, or a self-directed task at KS5. At KS4 it is more didactic and might include consolidation tasks, revision posters, practise exam questions or tasks involving exemplar answers. Pre-learning/flipped-learning is a large feature of the taught unit in Health and Social Care at KS5.

Coursework-based homework is used frequently in Health and Social Care at KS4 and KS5. We may also set revision based tasks in advance of summative assessments. Students are offered guidance for revision, but we encourage student choice in revising in the ways that they find most effective (e.g. revision summaries, glossaries, posters, mind maps, revision cards).

At KS5, homework is regularly self-assessed in class with the teacher explaining mark schemes and answering questions. Often staff provide digital feedback on Google Classroom. Sometimes it is simply checked for completion (if it is a consolidation task that does not involve direct feedback).

We offer Independent Learners Guides, which can be found in the "Key Documents" section of every Google Classroom, for students who wish to complete additional work and broaden their horizons in Psychology. We are working on completing these for Sociology and Health and Social Care.