

# **Forrester High School**

## **Home Study Policy (updated September 2015)**

### **Rationale**

At Forrester High School home study is recognised as having an important role to play in the education of all pupils. It should be a partnership between students, teachers and parents/carers. It is an integral part of the total learning experience which should be undertaken out with the classroom and seeks to:

- Enhance learning
- Improve attainment
- Develop organisational skills
- Develop good study habits
- Promote independent learning & personal responsibility

The Home Study policy aims to enable all students to become....

- ❖ Successful Learners
- ❖ Confident Individuals
- ❖ Responsible Citizens
- ❖ Effective Contributors

### **Principles of Home Study**

All Home Study set should be based on the following:

- Work should be issued regularly to all students
- It should be related to classwork/course work
- Learning intentions should be clear
- Tasks should be varied and promote, where possible, active learning
- Set work should be manageable within an achievable timeframe
- Tasks should be appropriate to student's level and ability
- Tasks should be enjoyable and challenging
- Successful home study should be a partnership between parents/carers, students and teachers
- Tasks should promote personal responsibility and independent learning
- All home study tasks should be marked and/or discussed or reviewed in class with students

## **Planning for effective Home Study**

Home study programmes should be drawn up in accordance with the key principles as outlined above.

Tasks should involve a variety of methodologies and techniques:

- Planned tasks that are integral to coursework
- Spontaneous work arising from classwork
- Preparation for classwork

Not all home study tasks involve writing. There will be times when students are asked to undertake activities such as drawing, learning, planning, practising, reading, researching, revising and thinking.

Care should be taken to ensure that finishing off classwork is not used regularly as a substitute for a planned programme as this can result in little or no home study for some, while those most in need of help are left with the greatest amount of home study with the least support.

## **Time allocation & expectations**

Clear guidance should be given, particularly to younger pupils as to how much time should be spent on a home study task. Departments will publish guidelines as to the amount of home study parents can expect on the school's website; [www.forrester.edin.sch.uk](http://www.forrester.edin.sch.uk)

Staff should be aware that the amount of home study tasks given to pupils should be in proportion to the timetable e.g. in S1&2, a subject allocated 1 period per week would perhaps result in less home study tasks than a subject that sees that class 3-4 times per week.

In drawing up home study programmes, Departments should consider school demands on a pupil's time e.g. exam requirements, NARs and work experience placements etc. Formal home study other than revision tasks should neither be given out nor expected back in the week prior to the prelim examinations.

Forrester has moved to a platform called Edmodo for issuing home study where possible. Where this isn't possible all staff are to communicate at least, the expectations for home study on a regular basis, as it is issued, so parents/carers and students can keep track of work set.

Class teachers and Pupil Support Leaders should liaise promptly if either party is in receipt of information from parents/carers regarding problems with home study.

In S4-6 the individual deadlines set by the Departments for the completion of work required by the SQA should be issued to students and parent/carers. Such work on the

part of the students should be classed as “home study” and all Departments should be familiar with these deadlines when drawing up their home study programmes.

## **Student Planners**

To help students organise their home study, the school provides home study planners for junior students. Students do not have to pay for these though replacements for lost diaries have to be bought. Planners should be brought to school every day.

From S3, students are issued with iPad devices to enhance their learning opportunities. These will also help students prepare for work, setting reminders, capturing examples of good work and allow them to complete tasks to a high standard.

Students should be given time in class to log their home study tasks and should be encouraged to note deadlines for tasks to keep their study manageable.

In Social Education classes, students are shown how to use their time effectively. Parent/carers are asked to provide support by nightly checking that homework gets completed and by using parental codes using Edmodo to track all home study tasks.

Opportunities to reward punctual home study should be rewarded through the school’s reward system, ePraise.

## **The Role of the Parent/Carer**

The School would appreciate parents/carers supporting the following recommendations:

- Ensure that routines are established to allow home study assignments to be completed and to encourage good home study habits
- Assist students in managing and organising their home study programmes
- Use parental codes on Edmodo to track and monitor home study
- Where possible, provide a quiet area for home study or encourage attendance at the home study club
- Ensure students in part-time employment consider the effect this can have on their academic progress
- Inform the Class Teacher of any concerns or reasons why a home study task could not be completed

## **Late or non-completion of Home Study**

Regular non completion or late submissions should not be punished but staff should make note of this by completing a Pastoral Referral. In addition staff should complete a Departmental Home Study alert letter which should be signed by the Class Teacher and the Curricular Leader. The referral should be passed to the relevant Pupil Support Leader and the letter should be posted home, with a copy retained within the Department.

## **Home Study Club**

Departments will offer a range of home study support sessions throughout the year. Students will be made aware of these and have the option to attend and complete work as well as get further help if needed.

## **Active learning approaches to home study**

Staff are encouraged to take advantage wherever possible of developments in technology and interactive media to create interesting and relevant home study activities.

Staff should continue to seek to encourage parent/carers to take a greater role in supporting their child's learning by improving communication links and providing greater access to resources and support materials through:

- School and/or Departmental Blogs
- Edmodo and/or departmental social media platforms
- Links to support materials through the School website

Staff are reminded to ensure they comply with all the guidelines that are available through our Online eSafety Policy, the Council's ICT policy (orb) and the GTCS guidelines.

## **Departmental Home Study Outlines**