St Bede's Catholic College

Home Learning: Guidance for Teachers, Tutors and Parents

1. Purpose of Home Learning

The College aims to promote a consistent approach to home learning that ensures parents and carers are clear about its purpose and the expectations placed upon their child. We aim to provide opportunities for parents, students and the College to work together in partnership to further each child's learning.

At St Bede's Catholic College, home learning is an important part of the learning process. It supports classroom teaching, strengthens students' knowledge and understanding, and helps them to develop the independent study habits necessary for success in assessments, examinations and beyond.

The purpose of home learning is to:

- Develop students' knowledge and long-term memory to help them achieve their academic potential.
- Maintain high expectations for every student's progress and attainment.
- Foster intellectual curiosity and enjoyment of learning.
- Develop the responsibility, confidence and self-discipline needed to study independently.
- Reinforce and extend learning that takes place in the classroom.
- Prepare students for future learning, assessments and examinations.

We expect students to engage regularly with home learning throughout the week and, where appropriate, during holiday periods. However, we recognise the importance of maintaining a healthy balance between academic study and time spent on hobbies, sports, family activities and other leisure pursuits, all of which contribute to developing a well-rounded individual.

At no point should home learning place undue stress on students or families. If a student is finding home learning particularly challenging or stressful, parents and carers are encouraged to contact their child's class teacher in the first instance so that appropriate support can be provided.

2. Setting and Monitoring Home Learning: Google Classroom

The College uses **Google Classroom** as its central platform for setting, organising and monitoring home learning.

Rather than following a fixed timetable for home learning, each department sets tasks at appropriate points within its curriculum. This allows teachers to ensure that home learning is purposeful, relevant and timed to have the greatest possible impact on students' learning.

Students are expected to check Google Classroom regularly so that they are aware of the tasks they have been set and their submission deadlines. The platform enables students to view their home learning in one place, organise their workload and prioritise tasks according to their due dates.

Teachers will use Google Classroom to provide details of each task, including relevant instructions, resources and submission deadlines. Where appropriate, tasks may direct students to other learning platforms, such as Sparx Maths, Kerboodle or Quizlet.

To help students manage their workload effectively:

- Shorter home learning tasks will normally be set with a minimum of three school days between the task being set and its submission deadline.
- Longer or more substantial pieces of home learning will be given an extended completion period appropriate to the nature of the task.
- Teachers will endeavour to coordinate deadlines and avoid placing unnecessary pressure on students through the simultaneous setting of several substantial tasks.

Students are responsible for checking Google Classroom regularly, recording important deadlines where necessary and managing their time to ensure that work is completed and submitted on time.

Parents and carers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with Google Classroom and support their child in developing effective organisational habits.

3. Home Learning and Parental Engagement: Google Classroom Guardian Summaries

Google Classroom provides parents and carers with the opportunity to receive **Guardian Summaries**, offering an overview of their child's home learning and activity within Google Classroom.

Once this feature has been enabled, parents and carers will receive an email invitation from Google Classroom asking them to accept Guardian Summaries. The invitation remains active for 120 days. Once accepted, parents and carers will begin receiving email summaries of their child's home learning.

We strongly encourage all parents and carers to accept the invitation and remain subscribed, as this provides a useful way of keeping informed about their child's learning and supporting them at home.

By default, Guardian Summaries are sent weekly. Parents and carers using a Gmail account also have the option to receive daily summaries. The preferred frequency can be selected when accepting the invitation.

Parents and carers who would like the College to use a Gmail address for Guardian Summaries should update their contact details through MCAS or contact Reception at contact@stbcc.org.

Guardian Summaries provide information about:

- **Missing work:** Assignments that have not been submitted.
- **Upcoming work:** Assignments due today and tomorrow (daily summaries), or during the coming week (weekly summaries).
- **Class activities:** Recent announcements, assignments and questions posted by teachers.

Each assignment includes a link to further details. This provides parents and carers with view-only access. They cannot submit work on behalf of their child or interact directly with assignments.

Further guidance on Google Classroom Guardian Summaries is available from Google:

https://support.google.com/edu/classroom/answer/6388136?hl=en

Parents and carers should remember that students remain responsible for completing and submitting their own home learning. Guardian Summaries are intended to support parental awareness and engagement rather than replace students' responsibility for managing their work.

4. Expectations for Different Year Groups

Home learning will be set in accordance with the age, ability and curriculum requirements of students.

Year 7

Students joining St Bede's Catholic College will not normally be set home learning during their first few weeks at the College. This provides time for them to settle into College life, become familiar with their routines and develop confidence before beginning regular home learning.

Following this initial settling-in period, home learning will be introduced in a manageable and structured way.

Lower School (Years 7–9)

Home learning should normally be designed to take up to 30 minutes per task. Teachers should ensure that tasks are appropriate to students' age, prior attainment and stage of learning.

Upper School (Years 10–11)

Home learning should normally be designed to take up to 45 minutes per task. The nature and frequency of tasks should reflect the demands of GCSE courses and the need for regular revision and preparation for assessments and examinations.

Sixth Form (Years 12–13)

Students are expected to demonstrate increasing independence and take greater responsibility for their learning.

In Areté, students will be expected to read extensively around topics before lessons to maximise the value of contact time with their teachers. They will also be set tasks to complete during supervised study in addition to their home learning.

At Key Stage 5, preparatory reading and independent study are particularly important given the breadth and depth of A Level course content. Students should develop the ability to manage their time effectively and engage with subject material beyond that covered directly in lessons.

5. Characteristics of Effective Home Learning

Evidence suggests that the type and purpose of home learning are often more important than the amount of time students spend completing it. Some activities are particularly effective in strengthening students' knowledge and long-term memory, while others may have limited impact.

To ensure that home learning supports students' progress, teachers should normally:

i. Set purposeful home learning

Home learning should have a clear educational purpose and should be designed to:

- Introduce new content in preparation for subsequent classroom teaching (sometimes referred to as flipped learning).
- Enable students to practise a skill or process that they can undertake independently but have not yet mastered fluently.
- Consolidate knowledge and deepen understanding of content already addressed in class.
- Strengthen long-term memory through retrieval practice.
- Prepare students for assessments, tests and examinations.
- Provide opportunities for students to explore topics of personal interest and develop enjoyment of their subject.

ii. Design tasks that students can complete successfully

Teachers should:

- Ensure tasks are appropriate and well matched to students' current knowledge and prior attainment.
- Check that students can complete the task independently, while ensuring that it remains sufficiently challenging and engaging.
- Provide clear instructions and appropriate resources.
- Set realistic deadlines and allow sufficient time for completion.
- Make clear how much time students should normally spend on the task.

iii. Set home learning systematically and effectively

Teachers should:

- Set home learning at appropriate points within the curriculum, rather than relying on a fixed weekly timetable.

- Provide students with sufficient notice of submission deadlines, normally allowing a minimum of three school days for shorter tasks.
- Ensure students understand what they are expected to do before leaving the lesson.
- Record all home learning on Google Classroom, including clear instructions and relevant deadlines.
- Decide in advance how the home learning will be assessed, reviewed or used to inform subsequent teaching.
- Provide feedback or acknowledge completion where appropriate.

iv. Involve parents and carers appropriately

Parents and carers play an important supportive role in their child's education. They can help by:

- Encouraging their child to establish a regular routine for completing home learning.
- Helping them to organise their time and prioritise tasks according to deadlines.
- Taking an interest in what they are learning and encouraging them to explain or summarise new knowledge.
- Providing an audience for practising a presentation, performance or language task.
- Using Google Classroom Guardian Summaries to monitor upcoming and missing work.

Parents and carers should not be expected to act as teachers or to complete or police their child's home learning. Students should be encouraged to take ownership of their learning and develop independence.

5. Home Learning in Areté

In addition to the expectations outlined above:

- Students will be expected to read extensively around topics before lessons to maximise the value of contact time with teachers.
- Students will be set additional tasks to complete during supervised study.
- Students should demonstrate a high level of independence, organisation and commitment to their studies.

6. Types of Home Learning Tasks and Projects

Home learning will not necessarily involve a written task and may take a variety of forms. All tasks should have a clear purpose and contribute to students' academic development.

Effective home learning activities may include, but are not restricted to:

- Retrieval practice using knowledge organisers to strengthen recall.
- Low-stakes quizzes to check understanding and reinforce knowledge.
- Completing examples of past-paper and examination-style questions.
- Explaining concepts verbally or in writing.
- Reading texts in preparation for discussion in class.
- Practising performances, presentations or practical skills.
- Flipped learning, such as making notes on a relevant video, text or other learning resource.
- Completing activities on appropriate online learning platforms.
- Preparatory reading and research directed by the teacher.
- Revision and preparation for forthcoming assessments and tests.

Tasks that should generally be avoided unless there is a clear educational justification include:

- Unstructured research on the internet or in the library.
- Unstructured revision without clear guidance or specific learning objectives.
- Interviewing friends and family without a clear learning purpose.
- Conducting surveys without an appropriate subject-specific rationale.
- Copying information simply to create memory aids.
- Extended creative projects in academic subjects where the learning purpose and assessment criteria are unclear.

7. When Home Learning Is Not Completed

Students are expected to complete and submit home learning by the deadlines specified on Google Classroom. We recognise, however, that there may occasionally be circumstances that prevent a student from completing work on time.

Homework Club

The College provides a daily Homework Club to support students with their home learning.

Any student who fails to complete home learning by the specified deadline will be referred to Homework Club. This provides an opportunity for students to receive support with their learning, develop effective independent study habits and complete any outstanding tasks.

Homework Club is also available on a voluntary basis. Any student who is finding it difficult to complete home learning at home, would benefit from additional support or would prefer to complete their work in a supervised environment is welcome to attend.

Failure to Attend Homework Club

Attendance at Homework Club is expected for students who have been referred following non-completion of home learning.

If a student fails to attend a referred Homework Club session, they will be referred to the relevant Head of Faculty. The Head of Faculty will review the circumstances and may choose to escalate the matter to an appropriate sanction, such as a Faculty detention.

Continued Difficulties with Home Learning

Where a student regularly fails to complete home learning, or continues to experience difficulties despite attending Homework Club, the relevant subject teacher and Head of Faculty will consider what further support or intervention may be appropriate.

Parents and carers may be contacted to make them aware of ongoing concerns and to work in partnership with the College to help the student get back on track.

The College aims to identify and address any underlying barriers to completing home learning while maintaining high expectations of students' effort, organisation and responsibility.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

The successful implementation of this policy depends upon a partnership between students, parents and carers, teachers and the wider College community.

Students are expected to:

- Check Google Classroom regularly for new assignments and announcements.
- Ensure they understand the requirements of each task.
- Organise their time and prioritise work according to submission deadlines.
- Complete home learning to the best of their ability and submit it on time.
- Seek help from their teacher if they are unsure about a task or experience difficulties.
- Attend Homework Club when referred following non-completion of home learning.
- Make use of Homework Club voluntarily when additional support or a suitable environment for completing home learning would be beneficial.
- Develop the independence and self-discipline necessary for successful learning.

Teachers are expected to:

- Set purposeful and appropriately challenging home learning.
- Provide clear instructions and reasonable submission deadlines.
- Record all home learning on Google Classroom.
- Ensure students understand what is expected of them.
- Review, assess or provide feedback on home learning as appropriate.

- Monitor completion and refer students to Homework Club when home learning has not been completed by the deadline.
- Communicate with parents and carers where patterns of non-completion emerge.

Heads of Faculty are expected to:

- Follow up referrals where students fail to attend Homework Club.
- Review the circumstances surrounding non-attendance.
- Determine whether further intervention or a Faculty detention is appropriate.
- Work with subject teachers to identify and address persistent difficulties with home learning.

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- Accept the invitation to receive Google Classroom Guardian Summaries.
- Check summaries regularly and take an interest in their child's home learning.
- Encourage effective routines and independent study habits.
- Support their child in managing deadlines and workload.
- Encourage their child to attend Homework Club if they are struggling to complete home learning at home.
- Contact the College if their child is experiencing difficulties with home learning.

9. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that the College's approach to home learning remains effective, manageable and supportive of students' academic progress and personal development.

The College welcomes constructive feedback from students, parents, carers and staff as part of its commitment to continuous improvement.

Updated November 2026

To be reviewed November 2028