

# **St Bede's Catholic College**



## **Home Learning: Guidance for Teachers, Tutors and Parents**

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## **Home Learning: Guidance for Teachers, Tutors and Parents**

### **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. In addition, we aim to provide opportunities for parents, students and the college to work together in partnership to further each child's learning.

As such, the purpose of home learning is to:

- develop students' knowledge and long-term memory to help them achieve their academic potential;
- continue to set high expectations for each student's progress and attainment;
- foster children's intellectual curiosity and enjoyment of learning; and
- develop the responsibility, confidence and self-discipline needed to study independently.

We would expect students to have home learning throughout the week and during holidays, but hope that this would be balanced by time spent on hobbies, sports and other leisure activities, which all help to create a well-rounded character. At no point should home learning place undue stress on students or families, and we would ask that if a pupil is finding home learning overly stressful that parents liaise directly with their child's class teacher.

### **Procedure for Setting Home Learning: Class Charts**

Students are issued with a copy of the Home Learning Timetable, which should be used together with the online Class Charts system to inform students and parents about home learning that is set lesson-by-lesson.

Parents and students are given individual login details to access Class Charts. We recommend parents login and review the home learning set each week on the website. This will allow parents to monitor that home learning is being completed on time, and it is also the most immediate vehicle for home/college communication. Teachers will use Class Charts to signpost students to their home learning task which may be in physical paper form, or set via an online platform such as Google Classroom, Mathswatch, Kerboodle, or Quizlet.

Every effort is made to try and ensure that as far as possible, home learning is spread evenly across the week. Students need to learn the skill of managing their home learning and avoid it being left to the last minute, which is when problems tend to arise. As a guideline, we would expect that in the Lower School each piece of home learning would take about 30 minutes, and in the Upper School 45 minutes to complete.

There are times in the year when due to Holy Days, field trips, staff absence or other special events, home learning may not be set. On these occasions we would encourage students to undertake some reading, research or revision as appropriate. During holiday periods teachers may set larger home learning projects or extended study tasks, but we aim to avoid large numbers of such tasks being set simultaneously in different subjects.

## Characteristics of Effective Home Learning

When it comes to developing student's long term memory, evidence shows that the amount of time they spend on home learning is less important than the types of activities they do. Certain kinds of home learning tasks improve students' achievement considerably, whilst other may not be particularly helpful. To ensure all home learning activities enable students to progress in their learning, teachers will normally:

(1) Assign purposeful Home Learning that is designed to:

- Introduce new content to prepare students for subsequent classroom teaching (so called "flipped learning");
- Enable students to practise a skill or process they can do independently, but not fluently;
- Elaborate on knowledge or deepen learning that has already been addressed in class; and
- Provide opportunities for students to explore topics of their own interest to develop their enjoyment of the subject.

(2) Design home learning project to maximize the chances of students completing it, for example:

- Ensure home learning is appropriate and well-matched to students' current knowledge and prior attainment;
- Verify that students will be able to complete the task independently, but that it is still challenging enough to be interesting; and
- State clear and reasonable expectations for the amount of time students should spend on it.

(3) Set home learning in a systematic and organised fashion:

- Set home learning in good time within lessons according to the college's Home Learning Timetable;
- Confirm all students understand what to do (teachers may take questions or give one or two hints to get students started);
- Ensure all home learning has been recorded on Class Charts; and
- Decide how home learning will be assessed before it is set, since if it cannot easily be assessed it is unlikely to be effective.

(4) Involve parents in appropriate ways, for example:

- As a sounding board to help students summarise or explain what they have learned;
- As an audience for practising a presentation, performance or language task; but
- Not as a teacher or to police students' home learning completion.

(5) Home Learning in Areté, all of the above pertain and in addition:

- Students will be expected to read extensively around topics prior to lessons in order to maximise contact with the teacher;

- Students will be set tasks to complete in supervised study in addition to home learning.

### **Types of Home Learning tasks and projects**

Home learning will not necessarily involve a written task, and may therefore take a variety of different forms. However, all home learning tasks and activities will have a clear purpose and assist students in their academic development as explained above.

The most effective home learning tasks may include, but are not restricted to:

- Using knowledge organisers to practise retrieving information;
- Low stakes quizzes;
- Completing examples of past-paper questions;
- Explaining concepts either verbally or in writing;
- Reading texts to prepare for discussion in class;
- Practising performances; and
- Flipped learning (e.g. making notes on a relevant video or text)

Tasks that should generally be avoided include:

- Conducting research on the internet or in the library;
- Unstructured revision;
- Interviewing friends and family;
- Conducting surveys;
- Copying information to create memory aids; and
- Extended creative projects (from academic subjects)

### **When Home Learning is not completed**

#### *First non-submission (or inadequate evidence)*

If this is the first occasion when a pupil has not completed their home learning or the teacher believes there are mitigating circumstances, the pupil may be given a second chance i.e. to submit it the next day.

#### *Regular non-submissions*

For regular occasions when home learning is not completed, teachers will contact parents or carers and enlist their support to ensure the child stays on track. A Behaviour Point will be recorded so that the pupil's tutor and Head of House/Year are also made aware of the problem.

If home learning is still not being completed to a satisfactory standard, the pupil will be referred to the subject Learning & Teaching Team Leader. By this stage parents will already have been notified of a home learning problem. Possible sanctions at this stage include:

- Lunchtime detention); and
- Tutor, Head-of-House or Head of Faculty Home Learning monitoring report (if the problem is in several subjects).