



## Earlston High School

### Homework Policy

#### **Purpose of Homework**

The purpose of homework is to enhance learning and improve achievement. This aim must be kept in constant focus by both teachers and pupils.

Specifically, homework should:

- Reinforce what is taught and learned in class
- Enhance learning and teaching
- Prepare for effective learning in class
- Help pupils prepare for tests/assessments
- Identify problems
- Help pupils to work to deadlines
- Give pupils the opportunity to organise their study time
- Help develop study skills
- Give pupils the opportunity to organise their study time
- Foster a positive attitude towards learning in general
- Develop self-esteem through positive feedback
- Give pupils extra time to reflect on difficulties, presentation, etc.

## Basic Principles of Departmental Homework Policies

- Give pupils, at the start of the course, a clear indication of the homework required.
- Negotiate deadlines in accordance with pupils' prior workload (unless specific homework days have already been negotiated with the class).
- Set short-term deadlines (particularly when dealing with longer pieces of homework).
- Give due notice of homework deadlines.
- Regularly remind pupils of deadlines.
- Incorporate homework tasks into courses at the development stage.
- Link homework tasks specifically to course learning outcomes for pupils' benefit.
- Make clear to pupils what the purpose of all homework is (especially if the task is not obviously linked to current coursework).
- Use "exam style" language whenever possible for homework tasks.
- Consider the regularity of homework produced by pupils.
- Mark and return homework within a useful time-scale.
- Give adequate feedback on homework.
- Monitor the quality of homework.
- Give homework at the appropriate level.
- Give pupils time to write in their homework diaries.
- Involve parents at different stages in the homework process whenever possible.
- Remove all associations with "punishment" from homework tasks.
- Create the possibility for pupils to expand upon basic learning requirements (if they wish)
- Specify precisely what revision-type homework is required in the run-up to exams.
- Keep "finishing off" homework to an absolute minimum as it is a type which is often more burdensome for slower learners who may, additionally, have no source of support of help at home.

Time for homework required by each subject:

S1/S2	-	10 Subjects x ½ hour	=	5 hours per week
S3/S4	-	8 Subjects x 1 hour	=	8 hours per week
S5/S6	-	5 Subjects x 2 ½ hours	=	12 ½ hours per week

If a teacher has one class from each of S1, S2, S3, S4 and S5, the number of pupil hours spent on homework for him/her is around 100 hours per week.

## **Steps for dealing with the non-production of homework**

If homework is not produced at the agreed time:

- The pupil will be instructed to hand in the homework at the next appropriate time (as decided by the teacher).

If the homework is not produced at this second opportunity:

- The pupil will be instructed to attend class/departamental detention either on that day or at the next available opportunity. (Non-appearance of homework should be noted on weekly returns).

If the detention is missed:

- The pupil will be sent to the Principal Teacher who will set the final deadline for submission of the homework.

If this deadline is missed:

- A letter will be sent to the pupil's home giving another deadline for the homework (after brief consultation and a copy letter going to Guidance staff).

(Guidance staff to monitor number of letters going out to individual pupils)

Should the Principal Teacher's deadline – as set in the letter – not be met:

- Principal Teacher to refer pupil to SMT for interview, after consultation with Guidance staff.

Further action might include a Homework Monitoring Card\* and/or an invitation to parents to discuss the problem. Guidance staff should be involved on both these occasions.

Homework concerns AND improvements will be discussed briefly at each departmental meeting.

If a situation is improved after one month:

- Positive letter(s) will be sent to the pupil's home by the department(s) involved.

## **Appendix 1**

### **FURTHER STEPS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY**

- The organisational/study skills associated with homework must be TAUGHT (both in Social Education classes and by subject teachers).
- Each classroom should be supplied with a small whiteboard where homework is clearly noted for each class.
- The careful use of homework diaries and how they are to be used must be promoted whenever possible: in class, in Social Education and at registration if time allows.
- Website homework help must be made more accessible.
- Parents need to be informed (S1/S2 Study Skills Evening) as to how they can best help their children with homework.
- If offered, departmental help sessions might coincide with the timing of large pieces of homework.
- Each class should be issued with separate homework jotters to make organisation of marking, etc. easier.

**Appendix 2**

**REQUEST FOR HOMEWORK LETTER**

Pupil's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Date homework due: \_\_\_\_\_

Work to be done:

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**Appendix 3**

**LETTER TO PARENTS I**

Dear

(PUPIL)

(PUPIL)'s (SUBJECT) teacher, (TEACHER), has expressed concern that recently (PUPIL) has not been completing homework adequately.

The purpose of homework is to improve the achievement of our pupils and we believe that homework is a valuable part of the learning process. For this reason, it is important that all pupils complete any homework set to the best of their ability.

We would be grateful for any help you could give us in encouraging (PUPIL) to do his/her homework and handing it in by (DEADLINE).

Details of the work set are as follows:

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If you wish to discuss the matter further, either with (TEACHER) or with me, please do not hesitate to telephone the school to make an appointment.

Yours Sincerely

Principal Teacher

**Appendix 4**

**LETTER TO PARENTS II**

Dear

(PUPIL)

I wish to express my concern that recently (PUPIL) has not been completing homework adequately.

The purpose of homework is to improve achievement of our pupils and we believe that homework is a valuable part of the learning process. For this reason, it is important that all pupils complete any homework set to the best of their ability.

I would be grateful for any help you could give me in encouraging (PUPIL) to do his/her homework and handing it in by (DEADLINE).

Details of the work set are:

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If you wish to discuss the matter further, please do not hesitate to telephone the school to make an appointment.

Yours Sincerely

Principal Teacher

## Appendix 5

Dear

(PUPIL)

You may remember that I wrote to you recently expressing our concern over (PUPIL)'s failure to complete homework.

(TEACHER) and I have pleased to report that since then the situation has improved considerably and homework is now being produced satisfactorily.

We would like to thank you for your help in encouraging (PUPIL) to do his/her homework.

If you wish to discuss the matter further, either with (TEACHER) or myself, please do not hesitate to telephone the school.

Yours Sincerely

Principal Teacher

# EARLSTON HIGH SCHOOL - HOMEWORK CARD

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Week Beg : \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* PLEASE NOTE ANY HOMEWORK NOT COMPLETED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CARD \*\*

Day	Period	Homework	Due in	Teacher	Parent
MONDAY	1				
	2				
	3				
	4				
	5				
	6				
	7				
	8				
TUESDAY	1				
	2				
	3				
	4				
	5				
	6				
	7				
	8				
WEDNESDAY	1				
	2				
	3				
	4				
	5				
	6				
	7				
	8				

Day	Period	Homework	Due in	Teacher	Parent
THURSDAY	1				
	2				
	3				
	4				
	5				
	6				
	7				
	8				
FRIDAY	1				
	2				
	3				
	4				
	5				
	6				
	7				
	8				

Guidance Teacher's comments :

