



# ELLON ACADEMY HOMEWORK POLICY



Revised June 2014

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# 1 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE



Ellon Academy is genuinely committed to designing a curriculum that will benefit all our young people. An integral part of this commitment is to set regular homework tasks to enable pupils to benefit fully from Teaching & Learning. Homework is more than the completion of set work. It should be seen as a vehicle for promoting independent learning among pupils and a way of communicating continuing progress to parents.

Teachers have an important role in ensuring that pupils are aware of the wide range of purposes of work done at home and that the quality of work matches that purpose.

## 2. SCHOOL AIMS

### **Aim 1: Achievement and Attainment**

We have the highest expectations for every single young person who enters Ellon Academy. All our young people are given every encouragement to aim for the highest possible levels of achievement in educational attainment and life skills.

### **Aim 2: Framework for Learning**

We aim to provide quality learning and teaching experiences for all our pupils, based on their unique aptitudes, needs and abilities, delivered by a professional and highly dedicated staff. By constantly reviewing and evaluating our curriculum, we aim to ensure that the needs of all learners are addressed. We see each individual as unique and make every effort to make them aware of the school's responsibilities to them and also their responsibilities to the school, fellow pupils and the local community. Also, we have very high expectations for the learning that takes place in every classroom, and for each pupil's contribution to this. Good classroom relationships are crucial to developing a positive school ethos, firmly built on positive relationships between all partners.

### **Aim 3: Inclusion and Equality**

Ellon Academy has a tradition of being a fully inclusive school. We aim to help every individual pupil to benefit from education, and take pride in the support we continue to provide for pupils of all abilities and needs, within a framework of equal opportunities. We aim to be a caring community, providing the highest possible levels of support for all pupils. All members of the Ellon Academy community are valued and respected.

### **Aim 4: Values and Citizenship**

Promoting Education at Ellon Academy is firmly founded on a partnership that aims to teach pupils respect for themselves and one another. It also aims to make pupils aware of their rights and responsibilities both within the school community and as part of society generally, thus developing effective skills of citizenship and an awareness of the need to care for and value our environment.

### **Aim 5: Learning for Life**

Ellon Academy aims to create a learning environment that enables pupils to develop creativity, ambition, enterprise, and the skills and attitudes required for success in life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## **POLICY AIMS**

This policy relates specifically to the following school aims:

Aim 1: Achievement and Attainment

Aim 2: Framework for Learning

Aim 3: Inclusion and Equality

Aim 5: Learning for Life

In this policy we aim to provide a framework for pupils, staff and parents which promotes independent learning among pupils.

**The purposes of "home learning" are various, e.g.**

- To reinforce, review, practice & revise classwork
- To instill good habits and self-discipline with respect to study
- To prepare in advance for future classwork
- To enable pupils to access resources other than school resources
- To develop research and investigate skills
- To allow for individualised work
- To allow assessment of pupil's progress
- To provide evidence for departmental quality assurance purposes
- To train pupils in planning and organising time
- To encourage pupils in developing ownership and responsibility for their own learning
- To provide information for parents
- To encourage parental co-operation and support
- To create an opportunity for linking home and school

## **Homework Tasks**

Homework tasks should reflect some of the following functions:

- Providing opportunities to apply and use creatively the knowledge and skills that pupils are gaining in school
- Linking what has gone before to what is to come
- Be appropriate to the ability of the individual
- Allowing opportunities, where appropriate, for co-operative work, planning, sharing of ideas and resources

- Allowing opportunities for pupils to present the results of their research and thinking to fellow pupils either as an individual or as a member of a team
- Enabling the teacher to evaluate teaching
- An integral feature of classwork and not an "add-on"

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

### The Faculty / Department and Homework

Every Faculty / department should have a Homework Policy, which sits alongside the school policy.

The faculty / departmental policy should include: -

- a section on the use of the Homework Diary/Organiser
- the purpose of faculty/departmental homework
- clear guidelines for teachers and pupils.

#### **Guidance for Faculties and Departments:**

- It is important to emphasise the need for teachers and pupils to value homework.
- Appendices to the policy should include a planning calendar for SQA Courses including dates for interim progress checks and final submissions.
- Departments should inform parents, where out-of school learning is necessary to fulfill exam board requirements, e.g. projects, special assignments, etc.
- Underachievers and/or Cause for Concern forms should be used appropriately.
- Departments should have a system for monitoring and tracking homework e.g. use of a class grid to show satisfactory completion of homework and records of homework set. The Homework Club database can provide departments with statistics relevant to subject/subjects.
- Pupils should be aware that failure to produce their Homework Organiser would result in Promoting Education procedures being implemented.  
Ref: Charter for Learning "Pupils should make every effort to bring necessary books and equipment".

Failure to do homework should be communicated to parents by text or by using the homework organiser; parents should be encouraged to sign the pupil organiser on a regular/weekly basis. Repeated failure to do homework should result in referral to the homework club. The teacher may also wish to consider sending home an 'Underachievement Letter'. If these strategies are not successful then the PT should communicate with parents using the standard letter. Homework Club staff will issue details of non-attendance to PTGs but it may be worthwhile for teachers to also share concerns with the Guidance Teacher.

Note: The Promoting Education behavioural management system should not in normal circumstances be used as some form of punishment for not returning homework.

Faculties and departments should consider 'opting in' to Homework Club at times when they are referring pupils to complete assignments/projects.

## The Teacher and Homework

It is important that we: -

- give pupils adequate notice of homework to allow them to plan and organise work given by different departments.
- make pupils aware of the purposes of homework as set out earlier in this document.
- be sensitive to difficulties which may arise for certain pupils, e.g. social, educational etc.
- give pupils time to take down homework tasks with clear instructions given verbally as well as in writing preferably during the lesson. The date of return should be entered in their organiser. This is a task that SFL staff, who are supporting in your class could help with.
- insist on use of homework organiser. Failure to produce homework organisers should result in Promoting Education procedures being implemented e.g. using the levels.
- clearly prescribe standards of achievement expected, bearing in mind the individual pupils abilities. Spelling, Study Skills, calculations, etc should be delivered in a way which is consistent to whole school procedures.
- facilitate the progress of transferable skills
- establish a high expectation that homework must be done by all pupils.
- give pupils guidance on how to tackle homework tasks and how to plan and structure work. Planning should be seen as part of the process for all projects e.g. Standard Grade assignments, with interim and final dates being given. Teachers and pupils are encouraged to check the homework club rota in the library for subject details.
- give early feedback on work completed.
- check organiser entries on a random basis.
- use the homework club as a support mechanism.
- when recommending large groups of pupils to homework club teachers should consider offering their own expertise. At these times the homework club can become overwhelmed with pupils from your department.

## **HOMEWORK CLUB**

The Homework Club runs every lunchtime, in the Library.

The times are:

Monday and Tuesday - from 1.15 to the first bell.

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday - from 12.25pm to the first bell.

The club provides access to: -

- IT Facilities
- Non teacher support (eg Library and Technical Staff)
- Teacher Support - this can be subject specific as required. Any teacher can 'opt in' to homework Club Rotas during the session.
- Library resources
- Peer support (S5 / S6 pupils trained to undertake a range of activities)

The spaces in the Homework Club are limited, so pupils are encouraged to book into the homework before lunchtime. Pupils should also arrive promptly at lunchtime, so that they have sufficient time to complete any tasks set by their subject teachers, to the best of their ability.

It would also be helpful for the Library to know in advance if large numbers of pupils are to be accessing the resources/support so that appropriate staffing/resources can be put in place (e.g. computers). Teachers are encouraged to opt into the Homework Club Rotas at these busy times.

## **REFERRALS**

The Homework Club also provides support for those pupils, who for some reason or other, fail to complete the tasks set by the subject teacher.

### **Homework Club Procedure (Referrals)**

- Use the designated page in the homework organiser to refer pupils to the club. This page requires the signature of a parent or carer.
- Inform the Library of the referral by either writing the name(s) in the logbook, telephoning the library (3925) or using the referral slip. The club will then inform the referring teacher of attendance or non-attendance. PTGs are also informed of non-attendance on a weekly basis.
- Non- attendance, this should be referred by the teacher to the PT who should send home a departmental homework letter.

## **REVISION EVENINGS**

Revision Evenings are offered to all S4, S5 & S6 pupils prior to prelims and just before the SQA exams. These sessions are offered and delivered after school by subject teachers.



## Pupil and Homework

All pupils are expected to: -

- bring their homework organiser to school every day.
- replace a lost organizer. These can be purchased from the library at the current cost.
- write homework tasks into their organiser clearly, making a note of the return date.
- hand in their homework on the expected date of return.
- plan their homework tasks over the week to allow them to meet the deadlines set by the teachers.
- attend the homework club by 1pm (12.40 Thurs) when a teacher has referred them
- ask their parents to sign their organiser on a weekly basis.
- sign the homework club log (in their organiser) when referred by their teacher.

## Parents/Carers and Homework

Many subjects, especially from S3 upwards, require pupils to produce investigations, which are dependant on work done at home. These can count towards the final grade awarded

It is important that you support your son/daughter's ability to achieve success in homework tasks, throughout their schooling by:

- **Checking and signing your child's Organiser/Diary on a regular basis.**  
This will allow you to see what homework has been set, the due date and also monthly targets set and progress made.  
Teachers have been encouraged to communicate with you through the organiser to enlist your support when necessary.  
You can use the organiser to communicate with the teacher.
- **Encouraging your child to plan their homework schedule**

This will help avoid unrealistic amounts of work being done at the last minute.

- **Encouraging a regular routine for doing homework**  
e.g. regular attendance at Homework Club, or a quiet space and appropriate resources at home.
- **Ensuring that the homework routine is realistic**
- Ensure that leisure activities and interests are built in to any routine. Homework should be built round these interests.
- **Emphasising the importance of homework to your child**  
i.e. the need for reviewing the day's work, revision, etc.
- **Showing an interest in the work done by your child**

You are an important resource for your child. Sometimes you may not understand what he/she is doing and feel unable to help but you can always encourage, give ideas, comment on tidiness, numeracy and maybe learn along with your child. We all thrive on praise for our efforts. There are many useful websites for pupils and parents to access, see Appendix, alternatively, more information can be obtained from school library.

## POLICY CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Homework Policy was updated in June 2014 and will be reviewed as required and formally as part of the Ellon Academy policy review cycle as outlined in the School Improvement Plan.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Principal Teacher role:

- to monitor implementation of School and Departmental Homework Policies.
- to monitor quality and consistency of homework across the department.
- to monitor consistency of use of the diary/organiser.
- to communicate with parents/carers regarding non-attendance at homework club.
- to monitor departmental use of homework club or referral system (e.g. by informing library staff of possible increased access by pupils to complete task/s; making use of available statistics)

Teacher role:

- to check that pupils have their organisers.

- to check pupils' organiser entries for contents, planning, etc.
- to monitor attendance at homework club and refer to PT for non-attendance.
- to liaise, as necessary, with PTG

Statistical printouts from the Homework Club are available for departmental QA purposes.

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES

The main resource implications for this policy are:

- Staff familiarisation with this policy
- Agreed Collegiate Plan time allocation
- Finances to support identified school improvement, revision evenings, CPD and leadership priorities

## POLICY EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Evaluation and review of this policy will help the school to identify a wide range of CPD, needs and future improvement plan priorities to assist us in our continuous improvement drive towards excellence

## APPENDIX 1

### Useful links and contacts



Parentzone

[www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk)

Channel 4 Homework High

[www.channel4.com/homework](http://www.channel4.com/homework)

BBC Parents

[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents)

BBC Bitesize

[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/revision](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/revision)

BBC DynaMo

[www.bbc.co.uk/education/dynamo/parents](http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/dynamo/parents)

Grid Club

[www.gridclub.com](http://www.gridclub.com)

Parents Online

[www.parentsonline.gov.uk](http://www.parentsonline.gov.uk)

ParentLine Scotland

Tel: 0808 800 5026

[www.parentlinescotland.org.uk](http://www.parentlinescotland.org.uk)

One Parent Families Scotland

13 Gayfield Square

Edinburgh

EH1 3NX

Tel: 0800 018 5026

[www.opfs.org.uk](http://www.opfs.org.uk)

Parent Network Scotland

Tel: 0131 555 6780

[www.parentnetworkscotland.org.uk](http://www.parentnetworkscotland.org.uk)

Ellon Academy Website

[www.ellonacademy.org.uk](http://www.ellonacademy.org.uk)

