

Lhíat Myr Toiliú

Castle Rushen High School

Homework Policy

This policy has links to the following CRHS policies and should be read in conjunction with:

Teaching and Learning Policy
Marking and Feedback Policy
Assessment Policy

Latest policy update:	September 2019			
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Governor review passed:				
Policy communicated to staff via:	Email	INSET	Staff Briefing	Other
Date:				



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Policy Aims

According to DESC guidelines, 'Schools will have different approaches to the use of homework to support children's learning which will depend on factors such as the age of pupils and the needs of the curriculum. It would be normal to expect your child's school to communicate with you about how homework is used in their school.'

The purpose of this policy document is to provide a central reference point to clarify the Castle Rushen High School position in relation to homework. Staff, student and parent views gathered in 2018-19 contributed to the production of this document.

Rationale

It is the belief of Castle Rushen High School that homework is any preparatory work, wider investigation, follow up or activity carried out outside lesson time by students in support of their learning, both in school and in terms of personal enrichment. Homework at CRHS is also referred to as 'independent study' as we actively encourage students to take responsibility for extending their learning. Students who engage in independent study outside of the classroom and timetabled lessons, develop greater autonomy, make more progress and become life long learners.

At CRHS we recognise that students should have time to engage in a balance of extra-curricular activities, both in and out of school, developing personal, social, employability and life skills. We recognise that not all students have the same facilities and levels of support outside school. We recognise that family time and time to engage in activities to promote both physical and mental wellbeing is important. The setting of independent study must therefore enrich and support students' learning in a way that is relevant and proportionate, allowing adequate time for successful completion. We recognise that research shows shorter amounts of focused independent study are more effective than broad, lengthy homeworks. We do not have homework timetables as these are restrictive and reduce the responsiveness and flexibility we expect of our teachers.

In KS3, students can expect to have an independent study task per core subject per week. For other subjects, students may have a short homework per week or up to three more substantial tasks per half term, as and when deemed appropriate by the subject teachers. In KS3, students should be supported in recording their homework if necessary and provided with clear deadlines to aid personal organisation.

In KS4 and KS5 students will be set a greater quantity of independent study, which will be related to the examination courses they are following. It is essential at this level that students work outside lesson time in order to fulfil their potential and progress towards their target grades. Deadlines must be adhered to and students are expected to engage in ongoing self-study and revision, whether or not a specific task and/or deadline has been set.

The Library is an excellent learning and independent study facility and is available to students in any year as a place for quiet study from 3.45- 5.00pm Monday to Friday. Skills Centre is available 1-2pm daily.

As with all teaching and learning at CRHS, independent study should be engaging and suitably challenging, should encourage autonomous learning and should be acknowledged with verbal or written, teacher/self/peer feedback. On occasions where there is no set or specific homework task, teachers and parents can refer students to the 'Challenge Centre' which provides ideas and resources to extend learning.



Summary of aims of independent study

- To support students' progress
- To reinforce and consolidate the learning done in class
- To extend learning from the lesson, e.g. the completion of past exam questions
- To embed key subject content in long term memory, e.g. the learning of vocabulary or spellings
- To reinforce, practise and develop mastery of key skills e.g. calculations
- To engage in wider reading and research in preparation for future learning
- To practise skills required in assessment situations such as examinations
- To encourage students to reflect upon learning and act upon feedback to make improvements
- To develop study/life skills such as self-discipline, time management and working to deadlines
- To support the development of the 6R+ attributes (remembering, resourcefulness, readiness, resilience, relationships, reflectiveness)
- To encourage students to develop a love of self-directed learning

Types of independent study

Teachers are encouraged to set a wide variety of tasks to build a range of skills. These could involve reading, researching, learning, planning, practising, preparing, rehearsing, writing, making, filming, drawing, finding, interviewing, collecting, photographing. They will often be carried out individually, but could involve pair or group work. Students may be given choices as to what task to do, or how they wish to do it, which could potentially mean that they have independent study which differs from that of their classmates. Students may need to access the internet and there is computer and printer availability before school, at lunchtime and after school. As an inclusive school, we encourage independent study that is accessible and which recognises the varying abilities, needs and learning styles of our students.

Roles and responsibilities

Teachers

Teachers should set homework which is relevant and appropriate. Homework should not be set for the next day and time should be allowed for successful completion. Homework should not be set for the sake of it, but should be meaningful. Teachers should enable students to have a degree of choice about the way in which they complete homework, acknowledging students preferred learning styles where possible. Teachers should not base student assessment solely on tasks carried out at home. Teachers should ensure that their subject area has extension tasks available on the Challenge Centre or equivalent and should encourage students to access these. Teachers are free to decide within their subject teams as to the appropriate nature, quantity and frequency of independent study, provided it is concurrent with the rationale outlined in this policy. At CRHS we recognise the importance of feedback. Teachers should ensure timely feedback on independent study as appropriate, whether verbally or in writing. This feedback may be self, peer or teacher orientated.



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Students

Students should have opportunities to consolidate and extend their learning through independent study. They should expect to engage in a variety of study tasks outside lesson time in order to further their progress. Students should take responsibility for recording homework tasks in their planners, with assistance if necessary, and should manage their time in order to meet the reasonable deadlines set for them. When there is no set task or deadline, students can show motivation and initiative by accessing the 'Challenge Centre' or equivalent, as recommended by their teachers. Students should complete the independent study tasks to a high standard and should present their work in the way and at the time expected by their teacher.

Parents and carers

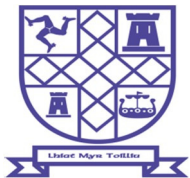
The support of parents/carers in developing good study habits is vital to us as a school. The development of good study habits will enhance student outcomes and will promote valuable workplace and life skills. Parents are asked to support their child in independent study by regularly checking their planners, by signing these weekly and by helping their child to manage their time accordingly. Ideally, parents should make available some quiet time, space and basic equipment in order to create good independent study routines. Where this is not possible, parents should encourage students to access the Library or Skills Centre.

Lack of independent study

Lack of engagement in independent study outside lessons can be linked to student underperformance. It is the responsibility of the student, with the support of parents, to take opportunities to extend or consolidate learning. At CRHS we want our teachers to be investing their time and energy in planning and teaching excellent lessons, rather than chasing up missing homework, which we perceive to be the student's responsibility. However, subject teams may choose to implement a sanction such as detaining students for repeated non-completion of independent study. Students who regularly miss deadlines or fail to complete independent study may find they are required to complete the work at lunchtime. They may also find that a teacher contacts parents and/or tutors to discuss the lack of commitment to independent study, to seek support in encouraging engagement of the student in learning beyond the classroom and to offer support, should this be needed.

Time

The amount of time spent on independent study should increase gradually from Yr7 through to Yr11 and into KS5. Neither CRHS nor DESC prescribe set nightly or weekly amounts of homework. A report for the Department for Education UK, 'Influences on students' GCSE attainment and progress at age 16', published in 2014, concluded that students in Year 9 who spent between two and three hours on homework on an average week night were almost 10 times more likely to achieve five good GCSEs (A*-C) than students who did no homework at all. Students who put more time into studying showed strong and significant benefits in terms of both attainment in GCSE outcomes and importantly, made more academic progress given their starting point at entry to secondary school.



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