



Toynbee Home Learning Policy

Name of Unit/Premises/Centre/School	Toynbee School
Governors' Sub-Committee	Learning & Teaching
Date of Issue/Review	March 2019

Governors' Overview - Home Learning Philosophy

At Toynbee we aim to promote student learning by providing a positive learning environment for our students in order for them to flourish and achieve. We believe that Home Learning plays a role in helping our students achieve their full potential as it provides them with opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills and develop a range of crucial learning habits such as independent thinking, resilience, initiative and intellectual curiosity through research. The guiding principle which underpins our approach to setting home learning is that it should be **Meaningful, Motivating and Relevant**.

Research Findings

The latest research from Professor John Hattie, looking at what impacts most effectively on students' achievement, ranks homework 94 out of hundreds of possible aspects of teaching. Whilst his research shows that home work has some kind of positive effect on student outcomes especially at secondary school, he adds that home learning can exacerbate social inequalities because disadvantaged parents struggle to help their child or do not value it. Instead his research shows that Student Expectations (Rank 1) Teacher Feedback (Rank 10) clearly designed Programmes of study (Rank 2) Teaching Strategies (Rank 12) and Parental Involvement, (Rank 51) are much more likely to impact on student achievement than home learning. Therefore, we believe it is best to assign home learning assignments which are really beneficial to student learning rather than as policy. For example, purposeful home learning could be introducing new content, practising a skill that students' can do independently, elaborating on information to deepen knowledge and preparing for the next topic to be studied.

The role of Home Learning

At Toynbee we will assign home learning to develop the following –

- **intellectual curiosity** by providing opportunities for long term research
- **collaboration** by involving parents, siblings and relatives in the learning process
- **independence** as students try to work things out for themselves



- **time management and personal organisation**
- **imagination and creativity** as students have the opportunity to use materials or sources of information not always available in the classroom.

School's Operational Approach to Home Learning

In setting home learning we shall ensure it is –

- Clear, well resourced & well scaffolded to be Meaningful & Relevant
- Able to be completed independently or with minimal support
- Have the right amount of challenge to be Motivational
- Monitored in terms of completion
- Marked so that it forms part of the ongoing learning cycle.

We will continue to refer to 'homework' as 'home learning.'

Our guidance is shared with students & parents via the school planner, school website and the online home learning software 'Show My Homework.'

Where possible, home learning tasks have been built into our programmes of study – please see the Curriculum subject areas on the website

Effective Home Learning Strategies include-

- Flipped Learning – preparing for the next lesson
- Online Learning such as GCSE Pod, My Maths, SENECA, BBC Bitesize,
- Research or Oral Presentation-based tasks
- Extended Enquiries in form of a project or specific target connected with class learning
- Revision for high frequency low stakes tests
- Preparing for formal assessments
- Reading with systems to check it is completed

Frequency & Amount

Time allocation for home learning will vary across subjects at different times and across different years in school.

As a general rule in Years 7 & 8 the **approximate** amount of home learning students could expect to receive would be between 2- 4 hours across all subjects.

In Years 9 & 10, when students begin their GCSE courses the **approximate** time will increase to between 3 – 6 hours across all subjects and in Year 11 students can expect to have extra home learning throughout the year related to their revision programmes.

Home Learning & Teacher Workload

Given wider concerns surrounding teacher workload, we encourage our teachers to make full use of the inter school sharing capacity and community assignment setting features available to them in



'GCSE Pod' and 'Show My Homework'. Similarly, any methods which departments use to set and monitor home learning are supported.

Student Strategies for Effective Home Learning & Expectations

Students should refer **daily** to the online software 'Show My Homework', to check for assignments and home learning that has been set for them by their class teachers. Students should use this tool to plan and organise their workload and check for deadlines. Some students will even submit their homework through 'SMH' or GCSE Pod' depending on the nature of the task.

Students will be encouraged to talk their class teacher, tutor or Guidance Manager if they are finding it difficult to cope with home learning demands.

Students who fail to meet home learning deadlines set by their class teachers will be dealt with according to the school's discipline chain. Initially, class teachers will reschedule the deadline especially for students who have missed a deadline for the first time or for some while or for understandable reasons (eg sports fixtures, trips). The class teacher will make every effort to emphasise home learning expectations of the school and talk to the student to find out the underlying reasons for any work not completed. When a student fails to complete home learning more than once in quick succession or the teacher detects a habit/pattern starting to form then the school discipline chain is triggered, transferring actions onto the Head of Department, & then Progress Director and SLT as appropriate, as well as contact with Parents.

Students who would like to receive a little extra support with their home learning can attend 'Home Learning Club' in the Learning Support Department which runs every night after school. In addition, for any students who need a quiet space to study or who need access to technology, the LRC is open and supervised every morning before school from 8am until am registration and at break times and lunch times during the school day.

Parent Strategies for Supporting Home Learning

Parents are encouraged to assist in monitoring student progress towards completion of home learning, but should not do the students' home learning for them. Parents can be most helpful in providing a routine time and place for home learning that is conducive to undisturbed study. Removing distractions like access to social media, video games & smart phones as well as insisting on a regular time slot for study will help their child/ren.

We also endorse parents discussing their child's home learning with them – showing an interest, discussing deadlines, confirming how they are going to meet them, checking that they have the resources they need, do they know exactly what they have got to do. All parents have access to their child's home learning assignments online through 'Show My Homework' to assist in this type of discussion.

Encourage a balanced lifestyle. Students who have regular home learning routines alongside the opportunity to engage in creative outlets, keep fit by playing sport, or get involved in community groups are more likely to be able to focus on their home learning.



Parents can discuss their child's home learning with the class teacher, tutor or Guidance Manager at anytime.