



Acorn House

KS3 Homework Policy

At Acorn House we believe that homework plays a valuable part in a pupil's education and the time spent studying at home makes a significant contribution to the progress a pupil can make in our dual curriculum.

There is a significant difference between KS2 and KS3 homework expectations. Students entering in year 7 will face the challenges of having to regularly accomplish allocated work/study at home to a different extent to the one they were used to in year 6. Commitment, discipline, consistency are keys to handle the requirements to face change of expectations and gradually get ready for High school/liceo. Middle school students have to get used to be exposed to learning a different amount of subjects.

RATIONALE:

Homework is work which is set to be done outside the timetabled curriculum. It contains an element of independent study which is important in raising student achievement. Homework enhances pupil learning, improves achievement and develops pupils' study skills and as such is an integral part of the curriculum.

AIMS:

- To extend and develop learning.
- To consolidate and revise prior learning.
- To further develop skills or techniques learnt in the classroom.
- To complete work begun in the classroom.
- To prepare for future learning.
- To conduct research.
- To promote independent study.
- To promote personal organisational skills.
- To enrich and extend the school curriculum.
- To prepare for internal and external exams.

At Acorn House in KS3 all students will be set homework where and when it complements the work they are doing in class and the study skills they need to develop. The type and length of homework set will therefore vary according to requirements. English and Italian Curriculum Coordinators are responsible for monitoring the quality, quantity and appropriateness of homework set in their department area. They also monitor how homework is assessed and ensure that effective feedback is delivered to pupils.

Pupils can do their homework at home. When needed they can use time during free period after lunch or during snack time at the library area to complete any due assignment.

Pupils need to address homework with a proper commitment and we ask parents to support their children and Acorn House teaching team in verifying that homework is handed in by the deadline.

How do we set homework?

In KS3

- English, English Science, Spanish, English Geography & History; Italian, Italian Maths and Science Italian History and Geography will set compulsory homework tasks per lessons and may set additional, optional extension tasks to be due on specific dates.
- Art, Technical Drawing, Italian Technology, Music and History of Music, History of Art will set one task weekly.

All homework is published on the digital class register accessible to parents and students into Regel system. It is therefore possible to keep track and monitor homework that is set. Staff, pupils and parents are able to view the homework when accessing into the system that can be found on the Acorn House website or through Regel system itself. We consider digital recording of homework useful because:

- Teachers can attach worksheets, web links, and video resources
- Homework tasks can be more engaging and interactive
- Students can always retrieve homework instruction and resource guidance

For pupils that do not have access to a computer at home they will be able to use school computers to print off the homework that has been set during their break time or write notes in their school diary at the end of each lesson.

Why do we set homework?

Homework is important because it:

- encourages pupils to develop the skills, confidence and motivation needed to study effectively on their own. This is vital given the importance of independent study for pupils for their future of life-long learning and adaptability;
- consolidates and reinforces skills and understanding developed in lessons;
- extends learning, for example through additional reading/research;
- sustains the involvement of parents and careers in the management of pupils' learning and keeps them informed about the work pupils are doing;
- helps pupils to manage particular demands, such as mock exams at the end of the year.

What type of homework is set?

This varies considerably between the many subjects taught and the different age range of the pupils. Each subject teacher gives specific guidance to pupils on homework expectations. At KS3 some subjects will set a mix of extended project based work or/and more frequent shorter tasks.

Not all homework is necessarily written work, examples could include any or all of the following:

- Practising classroom learned skills – learning by doing
- Consolidation of work done in class learning for example: facts, vocabulary, spellings
- Research work, often involving ICT and independent learning
- Reading
- Writing tasks
- Revision exercises
- Studying in preparation of oral interrogation – speaking tasks
- Online tasks
- Drawing maps, graphs, diagrams, pictures or design work etc.
- Making models, Collecting ingredients or materials.
- Completing coursework requirements
- Revision / preparing for exams, mock exams, termly assessments
- Project work^[1]_[SEP]

Setting, Recording & Completion of Homework:

At Acorn House each pupil receives time to record into their diaries tasks set for homework by subject teachers and the date by which it is due.

- Homework should be clearly titled and dated.
- The task set by any subject teacher should be appropriate to the age and ability of the pupil, challenging and offering extension work where appropriate, whilst allowing pupils of all abilities to access the work and progress their learning.

How much homework should my child be doing?

This question is asked very frequently and is extremely difficult to answer. Just like adults, individual pupils spend varying amounts of time to complete the same task(s). The length of time a student spends on a particular homework may vary depending on the nature of the task and the particular skills of the individual student.

However, considering UK guide lines in regards and requests from both curriculum, teachers generally would expect:

- **Year 7/8:** No less than 40 minutes daily and no more than 90 minutes daily, from Monday to Saturday.
- **Year 9:** No less than 50 minutes daily and no more than 2 hours daily from Monday to Saturday

Experience shows us that those KS3 pupils who regularly commit **10/12 hours per week** to home study, make the best progress. **Studying for more than 2hs and 10minutes on any one evening is not recommended** and so KS3 pupils do need to be well organised in planning their study time and learn to well distribute the weekly work load on a daily base.

English and Italian departments subject teachers agreed about time to be dedicated weekly to homework for each singular subject when students are in middle school

Subject	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English Literacy and Language	40'	50'	1h
Geography	20'	35'	50'
History	20'	35'	50'
Science	20'	35'	50'
Music	30'	30'	30'
Italian History	20'	35'	50'
Italian Geography	20'	35'	50'
History of Art	30'	40'	50'
Italian Literature	40'	50'	1h
Italian Grammar	40'	50'	1h
Math	40'	50'	1h
Italian Science	40'	50'	1h
Italian Technology	30'	30'	30'
Spanish	40'	50'	1h
Technical Drawing	20'	30'	30'
Total recommended weekly study time	Year 7 7,20h	Year 8 10h	Year 9 12,30h

Therefore homework will be assigned in the respect of this decision.

The weekly total amount of time needed to complete assignments will gradually increase to reach in year 9 the amount of 12,30 weekly. In year 7 and year 8 homework are assigned in order to accompany the increasing commitment in terms of time and daily consistency. It is important to consider the importance to dedicate a daily time to assignments so that the work-loads is distributed in the week.

Marking:

Marking will depend on the kind of homework the pupil has done.

Homework is marked according to Acorn House KS3 Assessment & Marking Policy.

- Some tasks may be marked by self/peer assessment.
- Sometimes the best way is for the pupil and teacher to mark homework together.

Pupils will always receive prompt feedback on their homework, although detailed written feedback may come at the end of an extended project rather than at all the intermediate stages, students will always receive feedback through constructive conversations to guide them towards their next target.

Monitoring - Rewards and Sanctions

There is an expectation that students complete the homework tasks set to a good standard.

Teachers within the House Points System will praise those students that are consistently accomplishing what is required (see details in the Behaviour Policy).

Sanctions will be issued for incomplete or late homework if necessary. Students are given one occasion per subject per term when an incomplete homework may be given a grace period of one day. This is to show consideration to students who have completed the homework in good faith, but made an honest mistake, such as leaving it on the kitchen table at home, or failing to save it properly on a memory stick etc. It is our way of showing that we are understanding and have faith in them.

After that one-termly allowance, any failures to bring in homework can be logged on the homework record immediately, excluding extenuating circumstances. The third time a missed homework is logged, a detention will be set up and a meeting with student and parents will be organised.

It is the responsibility of the Curriculum Coordinator to ensure that appropriate homework is being set and completed across each Department of our dual curriculum.

Each curriculum coordinator has the overall, ongoing monitoring role within the relevant curriculum area and the responsibility to communicate problems to parents, pupils and to the head teacher.

Holidays during term

It is detrimental to a student's academic progress to miss school for any reason.

Parents/Guardians are asked to organise holidays during term breaks and holiday periods only. Parents/Guardians choosing to take students on holiday or away from the learning premises during scheduled school term time should be aware that the student will be disadvantaged and his or her grade may be adversely affected.

Parents/Guardians should be aware that there is a legal obligation that requires a child to attend school on all designated contact days. It is incorrect for Parents/Guardians to believe that they may allow a child to stay home from school without a reasonable cause, such as sickness. If a child will miss the 10% of the total yearly learning time the teachers' board will decide upon attentive scrutiny of student's behaviour, study habits and achievements if the child will be asked to repeat the year or if he/she is ready to pass to the following class. Singular cases will be attentively scrutinized.

Parents/Guardians must send their children to school unless:

- they are too unwell
- they have an infectious disease
- the Head teacher is provided with an acceptable reason on writing

If the Subject teacher is directly notified in writing of any holiday arrangements **at least four weeks prior to the child's absence**, it may be possible, on compassionate grounds, by negotiation with the Curriculum Coordinators and the student's subjects teachers, to arrange alternate times for submission of take home assessments. The final decision regarding the setting of an alternate time for assessments rests with the respective Curriculum Coordinator. In the event of any dispute regarding these matters the issue will be referred to the Head teacher.

How can parents help?

The most important thing parents/carers can do is simply to take an active interest in their child's work.

The 'Homework' section in the digital class register into Regel system should be used by Class Teachers to communicate appropriate information and requests regarding homework

Parental support is requested in helping to monitor their child's homework and in providing suitable conditions at home where homework can be completed to the best possible standard.

If there is a serious concern regarding homework, then parents/carers should contact the relevant curriculum coordinator.

We often receive questions and queries from parents and carers concerning a variety of aspects of homework. The guide below will help you to further support your child.

'What is my role in homework?'

Encouragement and support are key. Ensure that your child manages and copes with the workload and talk to them about the tasks. Children who verbalise their learning are more likely to retain the knowledge and apply the skills.

'I'm busy and don't have time to help. What can I do?'

It's not essential that you sit with them and work alongside them, but showing an interest is imperative. Ask them what tasks they're undertaking that night and sound enthusiastic!

'My child doesn't tell me about homework. What can I do?'

Pupils should record all homework set in their diaries. In addition, KS3 Homework can be found weekly in the Regel class register. Suggested materials and resources to support KS3 homework can also be found in this specific area and/or on the web.

'My child's homework is set irregularly and then doesn't get marked.'

The first thing to do would be to talk to your child and make sure of the facts. If there is an issue, do contact your child's relevant coordinator or if the concern is with a particular subject, make an appointment to discuss it with the coordinator and the relevant subject teacher.

'My child spends more time than is necessary on his / her homework.'

Pupils work at different speeds. However, if they are spending inordinate amounts of time on tasks write a note to the relevant curriculum coordinator, stating how long has been spent on a task. The teacher will be made aware of the situation and can help the pupil to learn to better manage their time.