

HOMEWORK POLICY

Secondary School S1-S6

Update September 2025

Introduction

The homework policy document for the ESF has been produced with a desire to harmonise the approach to homework, given the unique situation of our school with the different language sections, approaches, methodologies and cultural perspectives.

The introduction of Artificial Intelligence and of Large Language Models like ChatGPT to education has led to a significant shift in how students approach homework. While ChatGPT can provide quick and easy information, it does not replace the need for critical thinking and problem-solving skills that homework typically demands.

The appropriateness of using AI varies greatly depending on the nature of the assignment and the specifics of each case. AI can be a valuable resource for homework tasks which focus on revision or preparation as it can act as a personal, on-demand tutor.

Conversely, students who merely input their homework into an AI tool and replicate the generated response will gain no advantage in reinforcing classroom material or consolidating their learning.

The purposes of homework

- To encourage and develop self-discipline and study habits and to give pupils experience of working on their own, and to develop in pupils a sense of responsibility for, and commitment to, their own learning
- To reinforce class work and consolidate learning (e.g. by completion of a task or by setting practice) or as preparation for upcoming lessons (e.g. to acquire background information or review previous topics) or as extension task to encourage students to expand on classroom learning
- To offer access to resources which are not available in school
- To involve parents in the educational process and provide an insight into the work of the pupil

Principles for teachers

- Ensure through their lesson planning that homework assignments are clearly derived from the teaching process for the learners.
- Formulate the assignments clearly and in good time before the end of the lesson
- Check the homework in an appreciative manner and ask about any difficulties or deficits that have arisen, clarify them or work on them in class.

- Inform parents/guardians (also possibly via sms) in an appropriate manner if homework is noticeably frequently forgotten.
- Where possible, give students more freedom in their time management and teach them to organize themselves better by setting tasks over a longer period of time.
- Enable opportunities for practice and consolidation in class through their lesson planning, thereby contributing to a reduction in homework.
- Assign homework in appropriate quantities and completion dates
- Avoid issuing homework from one day to the other in particular to the younger year groups and over the holidays.

Principles for students

- Write down the assignments and the “target date” in their notebook.
- Ask directly if anything about the assignment is unclear.
- Complete their homework independently. If they find difficulties solving an assignment, they note down the difficulties they encountered as specifically as possible alongside their attempts at a solution and discuss these in the following lesson.
- Inform the teacher of any forgotten homework at the beginning of the lesson without being asked.
- In case of illness, ask classmates about homework and lesson content and, if possible (depending on the time and type of illness) and in consultation with the teacher, catch up on this work.
- Transparently disclose their use of AI. This disclosure should include details about where AI tools were used, the specific prompts that were entered, the outputs generated by the AI, and how these outputs were subsequently modified by the student.
- Refrain from directly copying material from online or external sources.

Principles for Parents

- Support their children by taking an interested and motivating approach.
- Create the conditions for completing the tasks by shielding them from distractions, offering encouragement, and providing aids if necessary.
- Avoid interfering in the content of the homework. Help should be focused on the learning process rather than the result (completed homework).
- Consult with the teacher if the homework cannot be completed repeatedly or within the allotted time.

Useful links:

<https://www.eursc.eu/BasicTexts/2014-03-D-14-en-15.pdf>

<https://www.eursc.eu/BasicTexts/2022-01-D-6-en-2.pdf>

<https://www.eursc.eu/BasicTexts/2022-09-D-84-en-1.pdf>

<https://www.eursc.eu/BasicTexts/2018-09-D-69-en-2.pdf>