

# SWANMORE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

## Homework Policy

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.

All pupils will be set homework where and when it complements the work they are doing in college and the study skills they need to develop. The type and length of homework set will therefore vary according to requirements.

Pupils should do their homework at home or by special arrangement, in college after 3pm. It is not feasible for pupils to complete homework at break times or on the bus.

Pupils need to address homework with a proper commitment and we ask parents to support their children and the college in seeing that homework is done well.

### **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 carers in the management of pupils' learning and keeps them informed about the work pupils are doing;
- helps pupils to manage particular demands, such as GCSE coursework/controlled assessment.

### **What type of homework is set?**

This varies considerably between the many subjects taught and the different age range of the pupils. Each subject gives specific guidance to pupils on homework expectations. In addition, the college is currently producing homework guides specific to each year group for parents. These will be sent to parents as they become available during 2010/11, and will be available on the college website and VLE.

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

- Practising classroom learned skills
- Research work, often involving ICT
- Reading
- Revision exercises
- Drawing maps, graphs, diagrams, pictures etc.
- Making models
- Collecting ingredients or materials.
- Completing coursework or preparing for controlled assessment tasks

### **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). However, generally we would expect:

Year 7/8: No less than 40 minutes and no more than 90 minutes per working day.

Year 9: No less than 45 minutes and no more than 2 hours per working day.

Year 10/11: KS4 pupils need to manage many personal study and revision commitments and they will need to incorporate some weekend study time into their schedule. Experience shows us that those KS4 pupils who commit no less than 10 hours per week to home study, make the best progress. Studying for more than 2.5 hours on any one evening is not recommended and so KS4 pupils do need to be well organised in planning their study time.

### **How can parents help?**

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?'*

Look in the planner and check the subject sections on the VLE. We will also be piloting a homework aspect of the ePortal system during 2010/11 which will eventually enable you to see all the homework your child currently has set.

*'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 form tutor or if the concern is with a particular subject, their 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 make a note in their planner stating how long has been spent on a task. The teacher will then be aware of the situation and can help the pupil to better manage their time.

### **Rewards and Sanctions**

Homework is assessed in line with college and subject assessment policies. Pupils will always receive feedback on their homework, although detailed written feedback may come at the end of an extended project rather than at all the intermediate stages. Rewards also follow subject policies.

When homework is not handed in the focus of any follow up will always be to get the homework completed. If late an opportunity will be given to complete the homework for the next day, late homework after this will be logged on ePortal and a detention will be set plus further contact with home if needed.

**If you or your child have any concerns about homework, please contact the college for advice.**