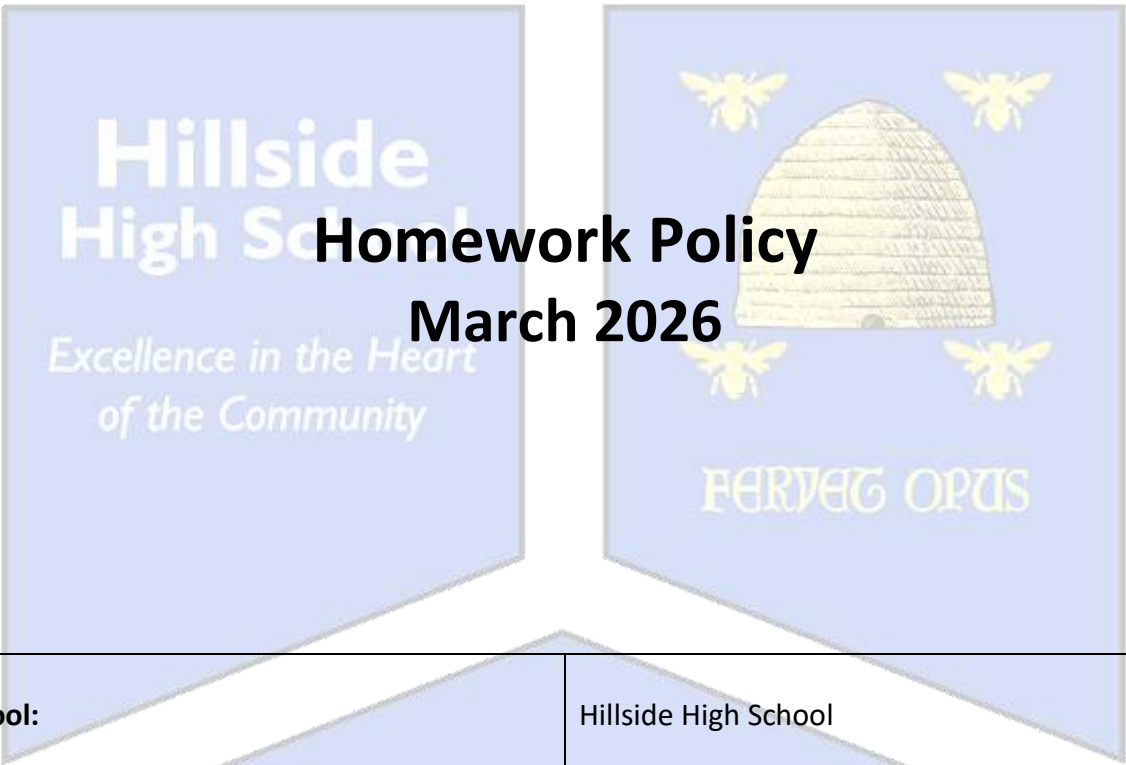


Hillside High School



Hillside High School
Homework Policy
March 2026
Excellence in the Heart of the Community

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| School: | Hillside High School |
| School Link: | Rachel O’Hara |
| Date of Governing Body Review: | March 2026 |
| Next Review Due: | March 2027 |
| Signed: |  |
| Chair: | Mike Cunliffe |
| Principal: | Amanda Ryan |

Rationale

At Hillside High School we are determined to raise achievement and expectations among all our pupils. High quality teaching and learning is critical to the progress of pupils, and appropriately challenging and purposeful homework is a key support to the learning carried out in the classroom.

Homework refers to any work or activities which pupils are asked or encouraged to do outside lesson time, either independently or with other adults or pupils.

Not all homework is done at home; in fact, for some pupils who find it hard to work at home, or for some tasks which may require resources (books, software, equipment) more readily available at school, it may be necessary or desirable to carry out the task at school. Homework enhances pupil learning, improves achievement and develops pupils' study skills and as such is an integral part of the curriculum. We have our Learning Resource Centre open before school, break, lunch and after school for pupils to use.

Evidence

Hillside's homework policy is underpinned by evidence of good practice from the Education Endowment Fund (EEF).

What does the evidence say?

Evidence from the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) shows that, on average, home learning adds five months' additional progress over five years of secondary school. Therefore, to ensure that our pupils make as much progress as possible, it is essential that the homework we set is well planned and purposeful. Learning is a long-term change in memory. When we learn a piece of information, we instantly begin to forget it. We know that over time, the amount of the original information we will retain will be significantly reduced, unless it is revisited often.

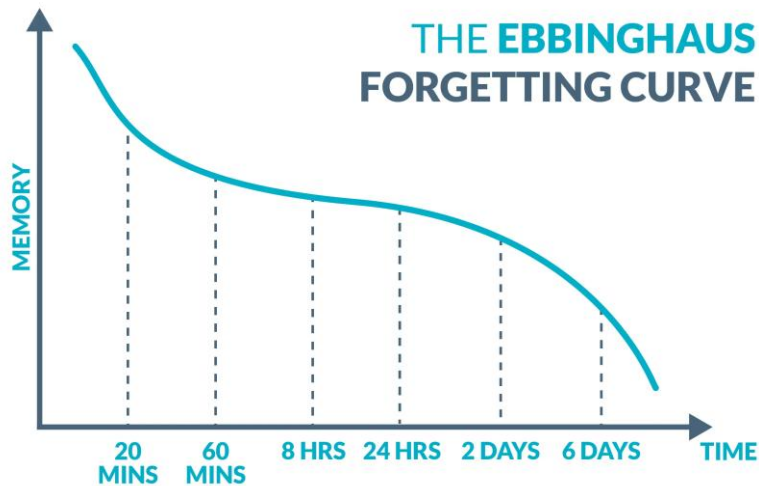
Homework is most effective when used as a short and focused intervention (e.g. a specific target connected with a particular element of learning) with some exceptional studies showing up to eight additional months' positive impact on attainment. Evidence also suggests that how homework relates to learning during normal school time is important. In the most effective examples, homework was an integral part of learning, rather than an add-on. Some studies indicate that there may be an optimum amount of homework of between one and two hours per school day (slightly longer for older pupils), with effects diminishing as the time that pupils spend on homework increases.

Aims

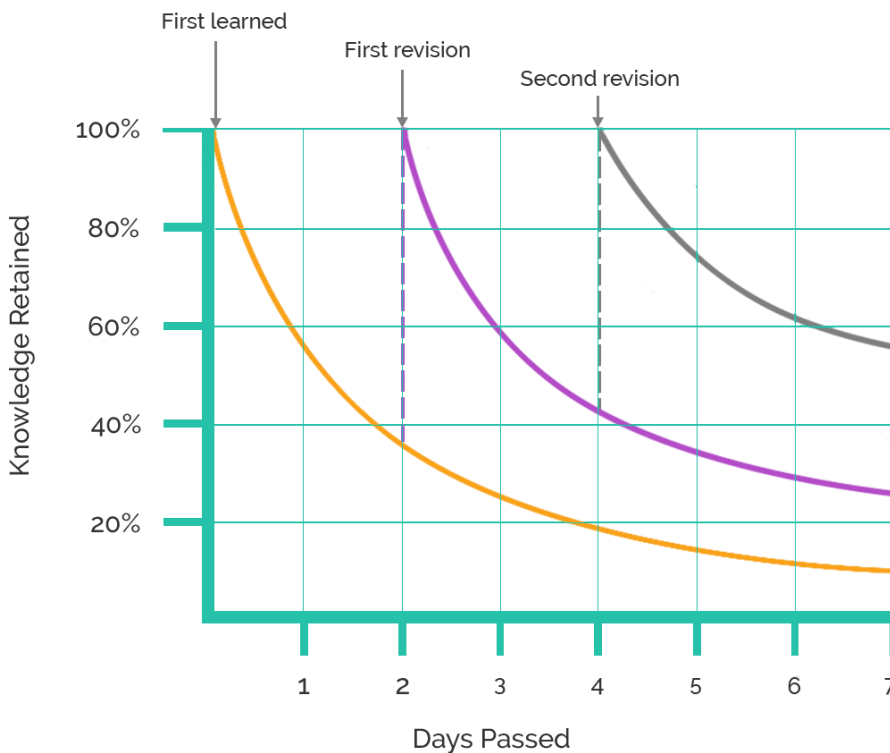
- To help raise the achievement and attainment of every pupil.
- To further strengthen home/school links and promote parental involvement and support.
- Encourage pupils to develop personal responsibility for lifelong learning.

Homework

Our homework strategy is designed to allow pupils to frequently revisit powerful knowledge in order to interrupt the forgetting process. The forgetting curve, developed by Hermann Ebbinghaus in 1885, illustrates that humans forget information rapidly, often 50%–70% within 24 hours if it is not reviewed. Memory decay is steep initially but slows over time. This decline can be countered through spaced repetition and active recall, which strengthen memory retention.



Engaging with homework activities will help reduce forgetting using regular review of learning. The repetition shown on the graph below shows that when we repeat the same information over and over it can strengthen the learning process.



How do pupils access online homework?

Pupils will have learning set on different platforms dependent on the year and subject.

Sparx Platform

We use Sparx to set homework for English, Maths and Science at KS3. Pupils will receive one homework assignment per week for each subject. Sparx assignments are generated using intelligent algorithm which will match the content to the mathematical abilities of each pupil individually, with some challenge to allow them to progress. The algorithm ensures that pupils spend a set amount of time on tasks each week with an opportunity to 'boost' their learning if they are keen to do so.

Seneca Learning

Pupils will be assigned online homework through a website called 'SenecaLearning.com'. Assignments on Seneca are set for English KS4 and are designed to prepare pupils for learning in the near future or reinforce learning which has taken place recently.

Language Gym - Spanish

This is an interactive website with Spanish content, which enables pupils to practise their language manipulation and comprehension skills. Content comes at all levels from novice to advanced. In the Games Room there are four types of activity called Verb Trainer, Workouts, Boxing Game and Rock Climbing. This website is used for additional study at KS3 and homework at KS4.

GCSE POD

GCSE POD is an online revision software that pupils can access at KS3 for additional study and for homework assignment for various subjects at KS4.

Additional Study Techniques to Support Home Learning

All pupils are provided with **Knowledge Organisers** which outline the core information all pupils will learn each term. Pupils can use these to support ongoing study. Within the Knowledge Organiser there are identified strategies pupils can use to help them prepare for assessments and interrupt the forgetting curve. Read, Cover, Check is a useful technique and is outlined here:

At the start of each unit of study, pupils are given a **Journey of Knowledge**. Outlining the core knowledge for that unit. These are stuck in their exercise books and will support homework. Pupils should work through their Journey of Knowledge and ensure there are secure with the content.

How to complete Read, Cover, Write, Check

Read – Pupils read and study a section of their Journeys of Knowledge or Knowledge Organisers. Class teachers will tell pupils which section they should be studying each week;

Cover - Pupils cover up the section of the Journeys of Knowledge that they have been studying;

Write – Pupils write down what they can remember from the section of the Journeys of Knowledge they have been studying;

Check – Pupils check how much they can remember and write down anything they don't in a different colour. The process is then repeated until all of the content can be recalled.

Homework Timetables

Key Stage 3 – Year 7 / 8 / 9

Weekly homework for pupils in Key Stage 3 is set by the following subjects English, Maths and Science. Assignments are approximately an hour a week but can be completed in shorter sessions. Due to the online platforms adjusting to pupil needs the time is an approximation. We recommend pupils split the homework into the two 30-minute sessions with a break in between.

Additional Study is highly recommended and built into the timetable. Pupils can complete additional work on the online platforms or use the Knowledge Organiser techniques shared earlier in this policy.

There will be, at times, additional study tasks and revision shared from other subjects also.

The homework is set for the week and is always due for the **Friday Finish Line**. However, we have provided a homework timetable which will support pupils in organising their time and getting into regular routines of little and often.



| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| Maths – 20 minutes English - 20 minutes Science - 20 minutes | Maths – 20 minutes English - 20 minutes Science - 20 minutes | Maths – 20 minutes English - 20 minutes Science - 20 minutes | Additional study | Additional study |
| Reading (fiction or non-fiction of choice) - 20 minutes | Reading (fiction or non-fiction of choice) - 20 minutes | Reading (fiction or non-fiction of choice) - 20 minutes | Reading (fiction or non-fiction of choice) - 20 minutes | Reading (fiction or non-fiction of choice) - 20 minutes |

Key Stage 4 – Year 10 /11

Core homework for pupils in Key Stage 4 is set mostly using GCSE POD, Seneca Learning and Sparx. Class teachers are free to set additional homework where appropriate. This may not always be in the form of a written piece of work or a worksheet but may be more research based and revision.

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| Maths – 30 minutes English - 30 minutes Science - 30 minutes | Maths – 30 minutes English - 30 minutes Science - 30 minutes | Maths – 30 minutes English - 30 minutes Science - 30 minutes | <i>Other subjects – three sessions of 30 minutes.</i> | <i>Other subjects – three sessions of 30 minutes.</i> |
| Reading (fiction or non-fiction of choice) - 20 minutes | Reading (fiction or non-fiction of choice) - 20 minutes | Reading (fiction or non-fiction of choice) - 20 minutes | Reading (fiction or non-fiction of choice) - 20 minutes | Reading (fiction or non-fiction of choice) - 20 minutes |

Setting of Homework for all Pupils

- Homework should be discussed during the lesson to ensure pupils have understood the task set.
- Pupils must be given approximately one week (although this may not always be appropriate) and the **deadline is always Friday.**
- Homework must be clear so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them.
- Homework must be appropriate to the age and ability of pupils.
- Homework must be planned as an integral feature of the curriculum.
- Homework must be planned with pupils’ access to appropriate resources in mind.

Subject teachers are asked to remind pupils about the provision available in school to support pupils with their homework;

- LRC – Open before school, during break and lunch and from 2.45pm - 3.45pm for all pupils.

Monitoring and Evaluating Homework

Class Teachers

- Part of our teaching should take account of the need to support pupils in the development of study skills using their Knowledge Organisers and any other materials provided by teachers.
- Class teachers should set and monitor homework through Class Charts or the relevant platform.
- Poor homework return should be challenged by teachers and followed up following school procedures.

Subject Leaders

- The Subject Leader gives guidance to subject staff about whether homework tasks are appropriate and plans for resources such as creating subject specific Knowledge Organisers or introducing subject specific online systems.
- Subject Leaders have a clear responsibility for monitoring the setting and quality of homework within their departments through learning walks and discussions with pupils.
- Subject Leaders should access Class Charts Homework Calendar, as well as other online platforms such as Seneca, Sparx, Language Gym and GCSE POD Dashboard, to ensure that staff are setting correct amount of homework for pupils and that staff follow correct departmental procedures for pupils not engaging.
- Subject Leaders should use Class Charts, as well as other online platforms such as Sparx or GCSE POD Dashboard, to monitor homework set Key Stage 4 groups.
- The quality and frequency of homework issued within a department will be sampled by a subject's senior link.

Hillside High School
Wade Deacon Trust