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## Whole School Homework Policy – ES Bergen

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## 1. Introduction

At the European School Bergen, we recognise homework as a vital component of the educational process, designed to reinforce classroom learning, foster independent study habits, and bridge the connection between school and home.

While the objectives and implementation of homework naturally differ between the Nursery/Primary and Secondary cycles—reflecting the developmental stages and curricular demands of each—we are united in our commitment to assigning purposeful, balanced, and pedagogically sound homework.

This whole-school policy sets out shared principles and tailored expectations for each cycle ensuring homework serves as an effective tool for learning and personal growth across all levels of our school. By promoting a harmonised approach across the school, we support continuity in pupils' learning to smooth the transition from Primary to Secondary.

## 2. Primary Cycle

### 2.1 Purpose of Homework:

The primary aims of assigning homework are to:

- ✓ Foster skills and attitudes that support successful, lifelong learning
- ✓ Encourage the development of independent study skills
- ✓ Provide parents with an opportunity to engage in their child's educational journey

Homework can take many different forms, including research, reading, drawing, collecting materials, and gathering information from newspapers, magazines, or other sources. The differing abilities and learning rates of children should always be considered.

### 2.2 General Guidelines:

- Homework should not be assigned during official school holidays.
- Teachers should use their professional judgment to assign homework that is appropriate, bearing in mind the length of the school day and the individual needs of the children.
- Homework is intended to reinforce and consolidate learning from the classroom.
- In Primary, homework should not be used as a formal assessment tool, as students may receive varying levels of support at home.

- However, it may informally contribute to the overall understanding of a child’s engagement, effort, and learning progress.
- All homework should be reviewed and corrected in class.
- Homework should never be used as a form of punishment and must always have a clear educational purpose, which is communicated to the children.

### 2.3 Differentiation of Homework:

Differentiated homework extends the principles of differentiated instruction beyond the classroom, helping to reinforce or deepen learning.

It may vary in:

<b>Content</b>	Tasks based on individual learning needs
<b>Process</b>	Varied methods of completing the assignment
<b>Product</b>	Different outputs based on child’s strengths
<b>Ability</b>	Adjusted difficulty levels
<b>Deadline</b>	Flexible timelines where appropriate

**Note:** Additional homework is not the same as differentiated homework. Additional assignments may be given to students who require extra practice to master specific skills or who need support in keeping up with lesson content (e.g., extra workbook exercises or additional reading time).

### 2.4 Teachers' Management of Homework:

- While homework is not a formal assessment tool, it can provide insight into a student’s work habits, consistency, and overall progress.
- Teachers should remain open to feedback from parents/guardians regarding the volume of homework and submission deadlines.
- Homework should be reviewed promptly with clear, constructive feedback being provided to support the child’s learning.
- Homework can help develop self-assessment skills and personal responsibility.
- If a child consistently struggles with homework, teachers should collaborate with the pupil and/or parents/guardians to adjust tasks or provide additional support.

In light of emerging technologies (e.g. AI tools), assignments should be designed to promote active thinking - such as independent research, problem-solving, or analysis.

## 2.5 Parents/Guardian's Involvement:

- Involvement should be appropriate to the child's age and individual needs.
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to stay informed about homework through diaries/agendas and regular communication from teachers (e.g., email, SMS).
- Support should be provided through guidance and encouragement rather than completing the work for the child.
- If a child is consistently experiencing difficulties with homework, parents/guardians should communicate with the teacher to identify suitable support strategies.

## 2.6 Recommended Time for Homework (Excl. L2/MT):

Level	Time	Type of Homework
P1 + P2	15 mins per day*	Reading, spelling, literacy, and basic numeracy practice.
P3	30 mins per day*	Continued literacy and numeracy practice, with occasional tasks in other subjects.
P4 + P5	45 mins per day*	Regular weekly schedule, with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy across various subjects

\* Suggested times are intended as a general guide. Teachers may assign homework at different points during the week (e.g. once a week), but the average daily workload will remain consistent.

L2 & Mother Tongue	No specific workload or time allocation is prescribed for L2/MT homework. Any assigned tasks should support language acquisition through engaging and enjoyable activities.  To ensure a balanced workload, L2/MT teachers should coordinate with class teachers so that the total time spent on homework remains within the above limits, taking into account children's varying work speeds.
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## 3. Secondary Cycle

### 3.1 Purpose of Homework

- a. **Reinforcement of Learning**
  - Homework helps students reinforce what they have learned in class by practicing concepts, skills, and techniques.
- b. **Skill Development**
  - It fosters essential skills like time management, organisation, self-discipline, and problem-solving.
- c. **Preparation for Future Lessons**
  - Homework can prepare students for upcoming lessons by introducing new topics or materials in advance.
- d. **Individualised Practice**
  - It provides an opportunity for students to learn at their own pace, catering to individual learning styles and needs. It should be differentiated when necessary.
- e. **Promotes Critical Thinking and Independence**
  - Assignments should encourage students to think critically, solve problems, and develop self-directed learning skills.
- f. **Building Responsibility**
  - Homework should be completed by the students themselves. Completing homework teaches students to take responsibility for their learning and meet deadlines.
- g. **A Bridge Linking Classroom Learning and Home Environment**
  - Homework creates a link between school and home, extending the learning experience beyond the classroom.

### 3.2 Principles of Homework

- a. **Purposeful**
  - Homework should have a clear pedagogical purpose, whether it's for practice, preparation, review, or application of learning. It must align with the syllabus learning objectives.
- b. **Relevance**
  - Assignments should be meaningful and directly related to what students are learning in class, ensuring engagement and motivation.
- c. **Achievable**
  - The level of difficulty should match students' abilities, allowing them to complete the tasks independently without excessive frustration.

d. **Variety**

- Homework should include different types of activities (e.g., reading, writing, problem-solving, or creative projects) to cater to diverse learning styles.

e. **Balanced with Life**

- Homework should respect students' need for balance, allowing time for family, recreation, and extracurricular activities.

### 3.3 Homework Assessment and Feedback

- Teachers can use homework to assess student understanding. It can provide insights into student progress, helping teachers tailor their teaching strategies.
- Teachers should review and provide timely, constructive feedback to help students learn from their efforts and improve (*c/f Assessment Policy*).
- Teachers should regularly assess the effectiveness of homework and adjust the content, quantity, or approach based on student performance and feedback.
- Completion of homework should be **considered as part of the overall assessment** of the pupil.

### 3.4 Amount of Homework

The amount of homework should be reasonable and not overwhelm students. It should consider age, developmental stage, and other responsibilities.

- The nature, frequency, and volume of homework is left to the professional judgment of the teachers. However, they should consider the number of periods they teach per week and assign homework proportionally, considering the suggested time for homework outlined below. It is important to emphasise that the suggested times are merely a guide and do not need to be followed every day or completed all at once. There may be days when no homework is assigned, and on other occasions, more intensive work may be required.
- The time used for homework should increase from lower classes to upper classes.
- In principle, the total amount of homework per week should not exceed 10 minutes (S1-S3) and 15 minutes (S4-S7) multiplied by the

number of lessons in the subject.

→ e.g., S1 Human Sciences: 3 periods/week × 10 = 30 minutes p.w.

- Large homework assignments or tests requiring more extended preparation must be announced at least one week in advance.
- Some tasks such as reading novels, preparing essays, or completing longer projects will require more time than allocated, especially for exam classes.

### 3.5 Practical Information - Homework and Tests

- Homework tasks should be clearly explained, with detailed instructions that make it easy for students to understand what is expected.
- All homework and tests must be inserted in SMS and need to be discussed in class beforehand.

#### S1-3:

- Homework and tests must never be set for the following day.
- However, a student who did not finish the class assignment may be required to complete it by the next lesson to avoid starting the new lesson with any delays.
- No graded homework and tests should be set for the first two days after holidays.

#### S4-7:

- Graded homework and tests must never be set for the following day.
- However, a student who did not finish the class assignment may be required to complete it by the next lesson to avoid starting the new lesson with any delays.
- No graded homework and tests should be set for the first two days after holidays, except for officially announced exams and B-tests.
- No students should be given graded homework and A-tests on the days of their B-tests (in S6/7 B-tests are called short written examinations).
- On the days between S4/5/6 B-tests (with a maximum of 1 test per day and 3 per week), homework and class assignments may be given. However, only short written A-tests (up to 25 minutes) are allowed.
- The time available for longer A-tests will be significantly reduced due to the extended B-test period and the limited time for testing afterward. Therefore, on the days between S4/5/6 B-tests, teachers are

encouraged to provide students with alternative forms of assessment instead of longer written A-tests.

- During the week preceding S5/6/7 examination sessions (i.e. S5 end of year examinations, S6 end of year long written examinations, S7 long written examinations), pupils need to focus on revision and only revision work or work helping students to prepare for their examinations may be given. Graded homework and tests are not allowed in that week.

### 3.6 Responsibilities of Students

**Students must:**

- Check SMS regularly.
- Respect homework deadlines.
- Catch up missed homework and classwork after being absent whether because of illness, a school trip or an other reason. Being away on the day that the homework is set is not an excuse for not doing it. However, in specific cases, individual agreements on the deadline can be made.
- Bring all the required material home to be able to complete the homework set.
- Self-evaluate their work after homework is checked in class or marked.
- Manage their time effectively.
- Seek assistance from teachers when difficulties arise. There is no guarantee that teachers will respond outside school hours, during weekends or during school holidays.
- Ensure that homework is completed at a high standard and is neatly presented.

### 3.7 Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Homework provides parents/guardians with insight as to what is being taught at school.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Consult their child's homework in SMS
- Provide a supportive environment conducive to learning.
- Contact the relevant teacher with any concerns about homework.
- Fully support the school's homework policy.
- Support the school if disciplinary action is required due to repeated failure to complete homework.

### 3.8 Consequences for Late or Incomplete Homework

- Failure to submit homework will affect the student's **A** mark.
- Teachers will contact the parents of the students who repeatedly fail to complete homework.
- For justified reasons, the teacher may decide to extend the deadline within a reasonable timeframe.

### 3.9 Plagiarism and Misuse of Artificial Intelligence

The school takes instances of plagiarism and misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI) very seriously. Such actions are forms of academic dishonesty and are considered offences against intellectual property rights. Plagiarism is strictly prohibited and is considered as cheating.

- **Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:**
  - Taking someone else's idea and putting it into your work without acknowledgement.
  - Copying from the internet without acknowledging the source.
  - Using AI to produce your work without permission and without acknowledging the source.
  - Copying a section from another student's work and incorporating it into your own without acknowledgement.
  - Repurposing content created fully or partially by another individual or an AI programme.
- **Guidelines for Students**
  - Pupils should correctly reference any material from external sources used in completing their homework.
  - Online grammar and spelling programmes should be avoided. Many of these programs take an uploaded assignment (a student's intellectual property) and offer it for sale on-line. If a student chooses to use one of these programs and is accused of plagiarism, they will have to take responsibility for this.
- **Teacher Evaluation and Detection**

Teachers will use their professional judgement to identify work that is not academically honest. Anti-plagiarism scanners can identify content taken from other sources and online tools can detect whether a piece

of work has been generated fully or partially by AI. Students need to be aware that their work may be scanned to verify authenticity.

- **Consequences - Plagiarism/misuse of AI**

- **First offence:**

The teacher will inform parents and educational advisers, speak with the student and allow them to resubmit the work.

The original piece of work will be given a '0' mark, which will be averaged with the mark of the resubmitted work to determine the final mark for the assignment.

- **Second offence:**

The teacher will inform parents and educational advisers, speak with the student and give a '0' mark for the assignment.

- **Third and subsequent offences:**

The teacher will inform parents and educational advisers, speak with the student, and assign a '0' for the assignment. Further disciplinary steps, such as convening a Discipline Council, may be taken.