

Homework and Independent Learning Policy

This policy is applicable to: South Hunsley School

Intended Audience: Parents, Students, Staff

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Name and Title of Authors:	Mr Barry Gray
Name of Responsible Committee/Individual:	South Hunsley School and Sixth Form Local Governing Body
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Homework and Independent Learning Policy

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INTRODUCTION

This policy is intended to establish the school's commitment to homework and independent learning as an aid to student learning and continuous improvement.

Homework can be defined as any activity or exercise related to the school curriculum which students undertake in addition to timetabled classroom activities and is set by the class teacher. These activities can take many different forms including written exercises, work on online platforms, past papers, research, planning, creative activities or independent reading.

Independent Learning can include homework activities (directed by the class teacher) but can also include student-led nondirected activities, including wider reading or independent revision and practice.

The school will ensure that appropriate homework is set for all students according to the aims and principles outlined in this policy. Departments will devise an individual subject homework plan in accordance with this policy.

HOMEWORK AND INDEPENDENT LEARNING AIMS

Evidence suggests that homework has a positive impact on student achievement and attainment in secondary schools. The aims of setting regular and high-quality homework include:

- Developing a passion for learning, not only for purpose but for its own sake
- Building student confidence
- Strengthening learning and memory through evidence informed routines and practices
- Raising achievement of students
- Developing transferable study skills

HOMEWORK AND INDEPENDENT LEARNING PRINCIPLES

Homework that is closely linked to class teaching is shown to be most effective. Most homework activities set will be retrieval-based tasks, allowing students to recall and use key information that has been taught in lessons. This could include, but is not limited to:

- Learning and remembering key terms, facts, details etc.
- Answering questions based on work covered in class.
- Completion of past paper questions.

Other homework activities set that may link to classwork may be exploration based, where students are completing tasks that are looking forward to and preparing for future lessons. This could include pre-reading, preparation or research.

Teachers will consider the varying needs of students when setting homework, ensuring that appropriate work is set. Teachers will also provide guidance to students regarding expectations of independent work.

The school also makes use of a variety of online platforms that students may use to complete their homework. These platforms have been carefully selected by departments to allow teachers to set effective homework.

HOMEWORK AND INDEPENDENT LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION

- The amount of homework that is, or should be, set by teachers is difficult to define as this may vary according to topics, time of year, the speed at which the student works and the nature of the task. We are also aware that many of our students pursue a wide range of activities outside of school and we

believe that such pursuits are invaluable in developing well-rounded and happy students and are intrinsic to a balanced educational experience for young people.

- To support the workload of students we have implemented a ramped model homework timetable, where the amount of homework set increases each academic year. In the model, core subjects occupy a greater proportion of homework time, due to these subjects occupying a greater amount of curriculum time in the classroom.

Year	Subject	Frequency of homework set
Year 7	English, Maths, Science	Weekly
	MFL	Fortnightly
	Other subjects	Occasional – particularly around assessment periods
Year 8	English, Maths, Science	Weekly
	MFL	Fortnightly
	History, Geography, Drama	Approximately twice per half term
	RS and CP	Approximately once per half term
Year 9	English, Maths, Science	Weekly
	Other subjects	As and when appropriate
Year 10 & Year 11	All examined subjects	At least fortnightly
Year 12 & Year 13	All subjects	Weekly

- Homework tasks set by teachers are never optional and the school’s expectation is that all students will complete homework tasks to the deadline set and to a standard that at least reflects their academic ability and competence.
- Completed homework will be rewarded through praise and the use of stamps. Where homework is not completed, students will be given a “Be Ready” Written Warning in their planners.
- The completion of homework and the student’s attitude and commitment to it will also contribute to the student’s overall academic record and will form part of the school report.
- All homework should be recorded on Microsoft Teams as an assignment by teachers and students should also record their homework in their planners.
- Feedback will be given on homework in line with school and department policies.

ADDITIONAL INDEPENDENT LEARNING ACTIVITIES

On occasion students may wish to complete further work to supplement their homework and classwork.

Potential additional independent learning activities could include:

- Reviewing exercise books and classwork, ensuring that classroom tasks have been completed and reading through notes to ensure a thorough understanding of topics covered.
- Completing additional work on online platforms available in subject areas.
- Accessing the “Limitless Potential” area of the school website for resources linked to core subjects.
- Creating revision resources on materials, such as mind maps or flashcards.
- Answering and accessing further questions on topic areas.
- Wider reading around topic areas.

Class teachers will also be able to guide students on appropriate activities to complete in subject areas.

SUPPORTING HOMEWORK AND INDEPENDENT LEARNING

We appreciate that parents/carers often want to support their child with homework, however we are also aware that the knowledge and experience of parents/carers varies, and we wish to promote greater independence and good learning habits with students. We therefore do not expect parents/carers to get directly involved with homework activities. However, parents/carers can support their child and the school by:

- Encouraging a regular routine around homework.
- Promoting good study habits.
- Knowing about homework, showing interest and encouragement.
- Checking the student planner for upcoming deadlines and written warnings for missed homework activities.
- Encouraging independent reading (either fictional or non-fictional), as this is invaluable in promoting good language, sentence construction and spelling, as well as improving generally knowledge and generating intellectual curiosity.

We have also produced a number of parent guides specific for different year groups and supporting parents to access teams and other platforms. These are available on the school website.

SIXTH FORM

- Assignments, pre-reading and coursework form a crucial part of all post-16 courses.
- Sixth Form students have time on their timetable which should be used for independent work in addition to the one hour of high-quality homework set by subjects. It is expected that each subject will set up to one hour of high-quality homework per week. Homework should be challenging, relevant and rewarding.
- Successful completion of assignments / homework is an expectation for all. Students who fail to hand in homework regularly will be placed on the academic stage referral.

Students should use the independent learning hours (2 hours per subject) to complete all work set, which may include tasks such as research, wider reading or re-drafting of a particular piece of work. Students can do the following to maximise their performance:

- Regular testing of key information
- Re-reading and highlighting class notes. Consider written notes, visual organisers and flash cards to support retrieval and testing
- Interleave multiple topics or subjects while studying, rather than dealing with subjects in blocks and moving on
- Generate exam questions and use past papers
- Vary the conditions of practice and change the format of study, often.

REFERENCES

[*Education Endowment Foundation, Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning Guidance Report*](#)

[*Education Endowment Foundation, Teaching and Learning Toolkit - Homework*](#)