



Clacton County High School

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Higher Expectations, Raising Aspirations, Transforming Lives

INDEPENDENT LEARNING POLICY

2023-24

This document was last reviewed:	Autumn 2023
This document is due for review:	Autumn 2024

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INDEPENDENT LEARNING POLICY

Independent learning tasks (homework) are an integral part of a student's learning opportunity at Clacton County High School. Independent learning tasks should be set regularly, but the amount of work set depends upon the age and ability of the individual student, together with the nature of the subject. The school seeks to develop increasingly independent learners who take responsibility for their learning and these tasks make an important contribution to this process.

All students will be set independent learning tasks that are challenging and relevant to their learning needs with an emphasis on the development of valuable learning and thinking skills.

Staff will set meaningful independent learning tasks using 'Arbor', which can be accessed at home via the Arbor App. This is the same App that is available for families to check on behaviour and receive communications from the school. In addition, all students should be carrying their independent learning folder with them every day. Staff may choose to give students resources to be completed at home as part of their independent learning and brought to the next lesson.

Staff may also guide students to access their learning via Google classroom; especially in KS4 or KS5, which students can access using their cchs.school email account. Students may wish to submit their homework here online.

If students are unable to attend school due to self-isolation absences, independent learning will be set for students to access via Google classroom. There is an expectation that students will actively participate in independent learning in this way if self-isolation is needed.

The school's IT facilities are available to students outside of lesson time both at lunchtime and after school on request. Students without access to the Arbor App remotely can use the IT facilities for this purpose. There is also a homework club that runs Monday to Thursday for students that would like to complete independent learning in this way.

Students should speak directly to their subject teacher if they are having difficulties completing their independent learning. If a student is unable to access IT at home to support their independent learning, they will need to contact the subject teacher who will be able to support them.

If the school is unable to be open to receive students due to adverse weather or medical reasons, independent learning will be set for all year groups via Arbor and Google Classroom. This will be indicated on the school website. Staff will be expected to set meaningful learning tasks that allow the continuation of the curriculum that would be covered normally within school. Students will be expected to complete work set on a daily basis following their designated timetable until the school is once again open.

Why we set independent learning:-

- To improve learning and thinking skills through recap and revision;
- To extend and enhance work covered in class;
- To develop good study habits, self-discipline and personal organisation;
- To develop reading skills and enhance vocabulary;
- To facilitate and encourage parental involvement.

Range of independent learning tasks:-

Independent Learning tasks could include any of the following forms:-

- Practice of skills, processes and knowledge linked to previous units of work using 'forgetting curve tasks';
- Exam question practice;
- Learning for tests;
- Analysis or interpretation;
- Internet search or other forms of research;
- Reading or vocabulary enhancement activities;
- Projects or extended tasks over a number of weeks, involving a range of the above.

Further Guidelines:-

- Independent learning must be planned, focused and deepen the knowledge and understanding of the subject being studied. It is not to be used to complete classwork, produce work that is required to make progress in the following lesson, or used for the purposes of summative assessment, as these need to be completed in class under test conditions;
- The purpose of an independent learning task must be made clear;
- The quality of independent learning is more important than the quantity, an individual task must not exceed 30 minutes in KS3 and 60 minutes in KS4 per cycle.
- Guidance for the amount of time that a student should spend on a task must be displayed on 'Arbor' together with any other instructions;
- Independent learning must be appropriate to the age and ability of students, with a variety of tasks of different levels of challenge, being beneficial;
- Students must receive specific and timely feedback on independent learning tasks, this may be in the form of a class discussion, response to a test, peer assessment, self-assessment or teacher assessment;
- Teachers should celebrate and reward independent learning success;
- Teachers must give a minimum of 2 days to complete a task and a second chance to hand in work if required;
- Teachers must follow up cases of students not completing independent learning with a short meeting/discussion with the students, either during or at the end of a lesson and follow up with a department catch-up session if required;
- Parents should be informed if recurring problems arise with the completion of independent learning;
- Subject leaders must ensure that independent learning opportunities are frequent* and listed within schemes of work;
- Subject leaders must ensure that the independent learning policy is monitored and applied by all subject teachers using the tracking tool on 'Arbor'.

** Frequency is dependent upon age, ability and requirements of the scheme of work, but a subject with two or more lessons per week, should aim to set one independent learning task each week and vary the range of independent learning tasks set. Subjects with less than two hours per week may be set fortnightly.*