Langley Hall Arts Academy

INDEPENDENT LEARNING POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Curriculum Policy.

Background

At Langley Hall Arts Academy, the term 'independent study', 'independent learning' is used instead of 'homework'. This is to provide the pupil with an ownership to ensure that they spend enough time on each subject area as required to consolidate their classroom learning.

Independent Learning is an integral part of education in that it:-

- Promotes students' self-discipline and personal responsibility for learning and organisation.
- Reinforces work started in class, extending knowledge and understanding.
- Gives opportunities to practise and develop skills.
- Allows parents to become involved in their child's learning.
- Is valuable in ensuring students' progress and raising achievement.

Amount of Homework

The academy does not have a fixed homework timetable with time allocated for different subjects on different evenings. Students will need to learn to manage their time so that they do some homework each evening. Each department will set meaningful homework when appropriate for that subject.

Independent Work Schedule

Years 7 and 8

1.5	Years 7 and 8 Independent work schedule
Subject/other activity	**Hours per week**
English Literature	1 hour
English Language	1 hour
Mathematics	1 hour 30 mins
Biology	1 hour
Physics	1 hour
Chemistry	1 hour
Geography	30 mins
History	30 mins
French	30 mins
Spanish	30 mins
	8 hours

Example of how independent work can be spread over the week:
1 hour per weeknight, 1 ½ hours Saturday, 1 ½ hours Sunday
In addition, 15 minutes music practice per day will be expected

Years 9, 10, 11

1.9	Years 9,10,11 Independent Work Schedule
English Literature	1 hour

English Language	1 hour
Maths	1 hour
1 Science	1 hour
A-Level Music	2 hours
Option 1	1 hour
Option 2	1 hour
Option 3	1 hour
Option 4	1 hour
Option 5	1 hour
	11 hours 1 hour x weeknights 3 hours Saturday 3 hours Sunday

Example of how independent work can be spread over the week:
1 hour per weeknight, 3 hours Saturday, 3 hours Sunday
In addition, 30 minutes music practice per day will be expected

The role of parents in supporting their child

At the start of each academic year a home-school partnership agreement will be issued to parents. In addition to this a copy of the Independent Learning schedule will be sent home with a letter and reply slip, outlining the purposes of the work, urging parents to:

- Provide a peaceful place in which their child can do their work, or encourage them to attend homework and study support clubs.
- Make it clear to their child that they value work.
- Encourage their child and praise them when they have completed work.
- Expect deadlines to be met and check that they are.
- Check and sign their child's planner each week.

Parental involvement in the successful implementation of this policy will be further encouraged by:-

- Publicity material made available at progress evenings.
- Raising the issue at a series of parent information evenings arranged for parents, throughout the academic year.
- Contact with the parents of specific pupils where the completion of work is a concern.

The planning & nature of homework tasks

Homework tasks should:-

- Be relevant, meaningful and set for a purpose.
- Not be used regularly for "finishing off" class work. This places a heavy burden on some students and too light a demand on others.
- Be differentiated on the basis of prior assessment to provide an equal and appropriate challenge for students of differing abilities.
- Be manageable for pupils in terms of time and resources.
- Be explained clearly to students so that they know what they need to do and how the work will be assessed
- Be manageable for staff in terms of marking
- Be varied.

Suggestions include:-

- Writing assignments.

● Learning assignments. (Where students may be asked to learn a piece of work, practice a skill, recall knowledge)
● Preparing an oral presentation.
● Reading in preparation for a future lesson.
● Finding out information/researching a project.
● Using a specific website
● Revision activities in preparation for examinations.
● Reading for pleasure.
● Subject projects

Special Educational Needs

For SEN students homework tasks should be differentiated and balanced, to allow them to share fully in the work of the class and cater for their individual learning needs. Independent work should not be seen as an attempt to allow SEN students to catch up with the rest of the class. Prior liaison with the SENCO should aim to ensure that tasks are manageable and skill practice incorporated. Tasks should be varied, have a clear focus and time-guideline and give SEN students plenty of opportunities to succeed.

The recording & monitoring of homework

Subject Policies and Schemes of Work must reflect the Academy's Independent Learning Policy and procedures. Subject strategies should be agreed and reviewed regularly to ensure effective setting, recording, marking and monitoring of independent work.

Students must record all homework set. Time should be set aside for this during each lesson. Students with SEN must, where appropriate, be given extra help in writing down homework. Parents, in accordance with the Home-School Agreement, are expected to support their child each week. Form tutors should check that the independent work is completed on a weekly basis, and where significant problems arise they should be referred to the Form Tutor.

The Leadership Team will have a monitoring role to ensure that homework is being set across each Key Stage and will carry out systematic sampling at regular intervals. Serious difficulties experienced by the Form Tutor may be referred to the Leadership Team.

Subject staff must keep a written record of homework set and must ensure that the work that is set and marked regularly, in accordance with school and subject policy.

It is the responsibility of the Leadership Team to ensure that an evaluation and review of school homework policy and procedures is undertaken. The key criterion will be the extent to which the policy is contributing to students' progress and their attitude to learning.

Feedback to students

Effective and prompt feedback is fundamental in helping students to progress. Schemes of work must include how independent work tasks are to be assessed, and the criteria must be shared with students. Written comments must be constructive, indicating to the student what and how to improve. Student self and peer evaluation exercises and the use of model answers are useful to aid students' understanding of assessment procedures. Success must be rewarded and student self-esteem raised.

Suggestions include:-

- The use of the reward system.
- Recommendation for Awards.
- The use of departmental certificates and postcards.
- Verbal praise to individuals and groups.
- Students' work displayed in classrooms and corridors.
- Recording achievements.

Strategies for supporting the completion of homework

The primary aim is to impress upon students that independent work is a vital part of their education, to be done at home or within study support sessions. A variety of strategies must be employed to ensure the successful completion of this work. If students fail to submit or complete their work this must be recorded by subject staff. Providing that there are no extenuating circumstances, students must complete the set work:-

- Independently
- by recorded attendance at a study support or homework group
- within a subject/department detention.

Further failure to complete homework will result in referral to the relevant Form Tutor and the student issued with a school sanction, where, if appropriate, the task will be completed. It is the responsibility of the subject teacher to supply work.

A further referral to the Form Tutor will result in a letter to parents outlining the nature of the problem and an intention to place the student on homework report. The co-operation of the parents is requested at this stage.

If failure to comply with homework requirements continues while the student is on homework report, the Form Tutor will request a parental interview. Failure to comply at this stage will result in an interview with the school Principal.

Generative artificial intelligence in education

In line with the recent statement on Generative artificial intelligence in education from the department of Education https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-education Langley Hall Arts Academy will take reasonable steps where applicable to prevent malpractice and protect its data, resources, staff and students.

Generative AI tools are good at quickly analysing, structuring, and writing text or turning text prompts into audio, video, and images. However, the content they produce is not always accurate or appropriate as it has limited regard for truth and can give biased information in the results. Having access to this technology is not a substitute for having knowledge in the subject matter.

The use of AI technology is not permitted in examinations, coursework or any work that is internally assessed and counts toward a qualification at LHAA. If a student is found to have used this technology to complete work, then sanctions will be applied in line with school policy or the Principal's discretion.

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Leadership Team.