



Ark Boulton
Academy

“Growing together, reaching higher”

**LOWER SCHOOL
INDEPENDENT
LEARNING POLICY**

2021-2022

POLICY INFORMATION

Named personnel with designated responsibility for

| Academic Year | Designated Senior Person | Deputy Designated Senior Person | Nominated Governor | Chair of Governors |
|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2021-2022 | Y Crawford | C Entwistle | N/A | M Gregory |

Policy Review Dates

| Review Date | Changes Made | By Whom |
|-------------|--------------|---------|
| | | |
| | | |

Ratification by LGB

| Academic Year | Date of Ratification | Chair of Governors |
|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| | | |

Dates of staff training for this academic year (if applicable)

| Academic Year 2021-22 | | |
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1. RATIONALE

At Ark Boulton Academy, we believe that independent learning activities provide a valuable opportunity for students to both consolidate and extend their learning whilst outside of the classroom environment.

Independent learning refers to any work or activity which students are asked to do outside of lesson time.

The Ark Boulton Academy 'Lower School Independent Learning' policy has been updated to build upon the successes seen in the classroom, and to allow for students to learn more and remember more. Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the clear need for technology to form the basis of our homework strategy. Throughout the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years, we have made great progress in improving our student's access to technology, and their digital literacy.

We are now in the privileged position where all students have been given Chromebooks, unless they did not request one due to existing access to technological devices. Students have been trained on how to access MS Teams for live lessons, and how to access and complete assignments set through MS Teams. This means we are now in a position where we can digitalise homework.

2. AIMS

- To develop students' skills, confidence and motivation needed to study and research effectively on their own, to prepare them for Upper School, and their final GCSE examinations, and life after secondary school.
- To quality assure independent work at a departmental, and wider curriculum level, to increase the consistency in how often homework is set across subjects in Lower School.
- To use the digitalisation of homework to increase the involvement of parents/carers in the support of pupil's learning.
- Support the academy values and our character education within the academy by increasing students' self-discipline and commitment to their learning, outside of the classroom.
- To reduce staff workload in the collection, and marking of homework through the integration of self-marking digital independent learning where appropriate
- To use independent learning in Lower School as a form of data collection, which informs further reteach in the classroom.
- To centralise the tracking of independent learning across Lower School to enable staff, at all levels, to have an overview of cohort, subject and class level data for the engagement in independent learning.
- To develop a clear working rhythm for setting and tracking independent learning aligning both Upper and Lower School to support the reduction of workload of staff and support students in completing tasks on time.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

- Students in Lower School will be taught how to access TEAMS and how to access and submit their assignments via the “turn it in” function through their Computer Science lessons.
- Students in Lower School will be set at least one hour of independent learning per subject, per week via TEAMS. All students will have one week to complete their independent learning tasks.
- Subject leaders will create homework based on previously taught content, to allow students to learn more and remember more.
- Subject leaders will create homework using one of these digital programmes:
 1. **Hegarty** (For maths questions)
 2. **Nearpod** (For interactive and self-marked independent learning)
 3. **OneNote** (For worksheets which can be collaboratively completed by staff and students)
 4. **MS Forms** (For self-marked independent learning, and “intelligent” quizzing which allows for differentiated homework)
 5. **Microsoft Word** (For worksheets to be downloaded and/or edited by students)
- Subject leaders will distribute homework weekly as an assignment via MS TEAMS. This should be assigned to each class within their subject area. If teachers need to amend or adapt this homework for the specific needs of their class, this should be supported by the subject leader.
- Class teachers will remind students in class how to access the assignment, and how to submit their work, via the “turn it in function”
- Class teachers will email their class as the deadline approaches to give “shout outs” to those who have already completed the homework, and to remind the rest of the class how to access and complete this work.
- Class teachers will track the completion of homework after the deadline and set a “Ks3 NoHWk” detention for incomplete homework. This must be followed with a phone call home to parents to reset expectations for independent learning. The homework must be turned in the following day.
- Class teachers will read the homework turned in by students and use this to plan their lessons, and any required re-teach of content.
- Subject Leads and Faculty Directors will also monitor the homework turned in by students at a cohort level to inform any curriculum refinement required.
- Subject Leads and Faculty Directors will use formative assessments, learning walks, and book looks to quality assure the impact homework is having on student attainment and progress.

4. PRINCIPLES

- Digital homework activities should be accessible to all students.
- Digital homework activities should allow for the consolidation and extension of both knowledge and skill.
- Digital homework activities should allow for prior content to be consolidated so that students learn more and remember more.
- Digital homework activities should offer the opportunity to enrich the curriculum and develop students culture capital.

5. THE AMOUNT OF HOMEWORK

Students in Year 7, 8 and 9 should have one hour per subject, per week and should always be given one week to complete the activity.

Students are encouraged in addition, to read as widely as possible around their chosen subjects to broaden their knowledge. Each subject should provide each student with a stretch reading list/ digital revision resource.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

Students

- Students should keep a record of their email and TEAMS login details.
- Students should write what homework has been set in the yellow box in their Character Journal each week.
- Students need be self-disciplined and submit their homework in line the with deadline set.
- If students are absent, they are still expected to complete their homework. We want to support students in the continuity of their learning.
- Problems with homework should be resolved before the deadline. If necessary, students should see the member of staff concerned for help.
- Students should ensure the work completed at home is to a very high standard, which is reflective of their academic ability.
- If a student has internet access issues, they should inform their class teacher straight away so that a paper version of homework can be set.

Organisation of Independent Learning

All Lower School students have a Character Journal which they should carry with them at all times to record their homework.

All students will be able to access their homework from their TEAMS account, via their class page, assignments, and calendar

Academy Responsibilities

- The subject leader is responsible for setting appropriate home learning activities.
- The class teacher is responsible for tracking the completion of homework.
- The class teacher should praise students for excellent homework submissions
- The class teacher is responsible for monitoring the quality of homework and using the data from homework to inform future teaching and re-teach.
- Directors of Faculty and Subject Leads are responsible for monitoring the quality of homework and using the data from homework to inform curriculum delivery across the department.

Parents'/Carers' role in homework

- Parents/carers should support students with their homework but accept that their role will become less and less important as students become more responsible and independent.
- Parents/carers should try and provide a reasonable place where students can work or encourage them to make use of the academy's facilities.
- Parents/carers should encourage students to meet homework deadlines.
- Parents/carers should make it clear to students that they value homework and support the Academy in explaining how it can help them to progress.
- Parents/carers should encourage students and praise them when homework is completed.

1. EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT

We will do all we can to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, directly or indirectly. We shall do this through regular monitoring and evaluation of our policies. On review we shall assess and consult relevant stakeholders on the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of all aspects of equality, as laid down in the Equality Act (2010). This will include, but not necessarily be limited to: race; gender; sexual orientation; disability; ethnicity; religion; cultural beliefs and pregnancy/maternity. We will use an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment to monitor the impact of all our policies and the policy may be amended as a result of this assessment.

- The policy should be read in conjunction with the Ark Boulton Feedback Policy.
- This policy will be reviewed annually.