



King James's School, Knaresborough

POLICY STATEMENT

Independent Learning Policy

Policy last reviewed (date)	January 2022
Ratified by Governors (date)	January 2022
Next policy review due (date)	January 2024
Due for review by Governors (date)	January 2024
Staff Lead	Assistant Headteacher - Curriculum

MISSION STATEMENT:

This policy will support the school by being reflective of the Governors' direction and School's development plan. It will be used in an efficient and effective manner through valuing independent learning in the belief that independent learning activities should be an extension of lessons, so that students continue to learn beyond the classroom.

Significant revisions since the last review:

Full review/replacement.

Rationale

Independent Learning is defined as 'any work or activities which students are asked to do outside lesson time'. At King James's we value independent learning and believe that independent learning activities should be an extension of lessons so that students continue to learn beyond the classroom.

- Independent learning should feed into lessons leading to extended practice, creativity and review
- All work of this nature should have a clear purpose and should be a focused and planned activity
- All students should benefit from independent learning so that homework is seen as 'a rising tide to lift all boats.'
- The quality of independent learning is more important than the quantity
- Independent learning should lead to further engagement with and confidence around the curriculum and not be associated with sanctions

The purpose of any independent learning may include:

- to enable students to develop the skills needed for independent study
- to enable students to meet the demands of examined courses including coursework where relevant
- to review, practise, broaden and consolidate learning which has taken place within the classroom, including in preparation for assessment
- to sustain the involvement of parents and carers in students' learning and create opportunities for them to be involved in their children's learning

Principles for departments to follow

- Independent learning tasks should be clearly identified in departments' schemes of work. At Key Stage 3 these are identified as bronze, silver and gold tasks, dependent on the length of time it takes to complete them.
- Make the purpose of any independent learning task clear so that pupils understand how this extends their learning opportunity
- All such tasks should be planned as an integral part of the lesson. It is preferable that such tasks are set during rather than at the end of the lesson
- All independent learning tasks should be written in planners so that parents can support students at home and students can organise their time to complete these tasks
- Ensure that independent learning tasks are accessible for all students, and provide challenge to extend learning
- Consider the support offered for students doing out of lesson work. The school offers homework clubs, ICT facilities and there is a staffed library which is open to pupils to use before and after school
- Pupils should receive timely and impactful feedback on homework

Rewards

It is important that independent learning leads to positive outcomes. At King James's, independent learning is never used as a punishment; its purpose is to promote learning. Departments reward students using verbal praise, logging positives on Bromcom and awarding Student of the Week. The non-completion of homework is logged as a neutral event. If a pattern of non-completion of homework develops, we will provide support in school to encourage students to engage with homework.

Roles and responsibilities

All teaching staff:

- follow the department policy for the setting, marking and providing feedback on homework
- follow the school policy for rewards, logging the non-completion of homework if this is applicable to the task set
- communicate with parents/ guardians around issues to do with homework
- liaise with SEN staff on setting work for students needing support

Heads of Department/Faculty:

- develop and monitor department practice in line with school policy
- develop, with their team, homework tasks which are integral to schemes of work.

- respond to parents' queries and concerns about homework in their subject area

Learning managers and tutors:

- tutors monitor the completion of homework via Bromcom. To support teaching staff and tutees, they can liaise with teachers and parents if there is a pattern of non-completion of homework
- Learning Managers have the best knowledge of individual students in their year groups and may provide further guidance and support for teaching staff around homework

SENDCo:

- monitor homework set for SEN students and support offered
- monitor and develop Homework Club

SLT curriculum lead will have an overview of school policies and will monitor the appropriateness of the work being set.

Students record and complete all tasks set

Parents support students in managing and completing work, and sign planners

Monitoring

The policy will be monitored by the following, as outlined in Roles and Responsibilities:

- Heads of Department/Faculty
- SLT i/c Student Services will monitor intervention and related rewards
- SLT i/c Curriculum will monitor policies and standards of work set
- Key Stage Coordinators as appropriate

The Governors will be responsible for approving the policy and any amendments suggested.