



Clacton County High School

Walton Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, CO15 6DZ
Tel: 01255 424266 e-mail: admin@countyhigh.org.uk

Principal: Neil Gallagher

INDEPENDENT LEARNING POLICY

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Higher Expectations, Raising Aspirations

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INDEPENDENT LEARNING POLICY

Independent learning tasks (homework) are 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 'Show My Homework', which can be accessed at home via the School Website. Students are issued with a personal login, but along with parents, can access tasks without logging in first.

The School's Library facilities, with staff support, are available every morning and lunchtime to allow students to complete independent learning tasks (particularly tasks that require ICT). Subject teachers will always be willing to provide a quiet place for students to complete independent learning tasks if they are asked, and will help in its completion as far as they can.

There are independent learning clubs at lunchtimes in many subject areas. The Special Educational Needs Department provides advice and help with independent learning for those with learning difficulties at a club run every lunchtime in K Block.

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 60 minutes in KS3/4.
- Guidance for the amount of time that a student should spend on a task must be displayed on 'Show My Homework';
- Independent learning must be appropriate to 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 homework 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 'Show My Homework'.

** 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 weeks may be set fortnightly.*