

PLASHET SCHOOL



Working together to promote & celebrate achievement

Home Learning Policy

Revised and applicable from 22nd March 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Irene Papadopoulos', written in a cursive style.

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Rationale

Home learning is learning completed outside of the timetabled curriculum. It involves independent study in that it is not usually directly supervised by a teacher. It is important to increase student subject knowledge, support and consolidate skill development and support students to become independent learners capable of organising their own study time and practising study skills so that they might become autonomous learners. At Plashet School home learning is a planned and integrated aspect of each curriculum area.

Research has shown that there is a positive impact associated with regular engagement with home learning, particularly when the purpose is made clear to the students and activities are linked to the learning completed in school.¹

Overall the studies tell us:

- Home learning has a positive impact on average (+ 5 months), particularly with students in secondary schools.
- Home learning that is linked to classroom work tends to be more effective.
- Regular feedback on home learning has higher impacts on learning.
- Students must be clear on the purpose of home learning for it to have an impact.
- The quality of the task set appears to be more important than the quantity of work required from the student.

In our curriculum design, we take into account the findings of The Learning Scientists who are cognitive psychologists who have used research to find the most effective ways of learning material. Therefore, the same rationale is applied for our home learning design, namely, that it is regular and habit forming to ensure that students actively participate in retrieving relevant information from their long term memory and move it into their working memory in order to deal with problems or questions or to transfer their knowledge. The research from The Learning Scientists group focuses on the need for students to engage in study on a regular basis and to avoid cramming before assessments. The group has proven through their research that this is not an effective way to retrieve information. In order to encourage our students to self-regulate their learning, home learning is a key part of forming a positive learning habit.

Ofsted Guidance

Whilst Ofsted will not take into account the regularity or effectiveness of any home learning set in its new Inspection Framework, it is clear that using opportunities to learn outside the timetabled curriculum will be in line with Ofsted's 2022-27 strategy. It is also supporting the Ofsted Inspection Framework clear guidance that our curriculum must be 'ambitious' and have opportunities for the students to 'transfer key knowledge to long-term memory'², which will be further reinforced by activities such as retrieval practice as home learning.

¹ Research review 2021 -

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/homework>

² Ofsted Inspection Framework -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif/school-inspection-handbook-for-september-2023#part-2>

The aim of Home Learning at Plashet School

Home learning at Plashet is designed to dovetail into both the curriculum and assessment policies in order to help ensure that every student continually aspires to ever higher standards. This means that home study plays a vital role in all students working towards a mastery of the subjects they choose to study at GCSE. Therefore, home study supports the retention of an ever increasing range of knowledge from Year 7 to Year 11 and aims to support students to use this knowledge in an increasingly complex range of ways. Home learning is designed to:

- Support a mastery approach to learning, supporting our spiral approach to curriculum planning.
- Link directly to learning experiences within the classroom.
- Be matched to student needs, aiming to broaden and deepen the knowledge of students from their various starting points.
- To challenge students' thinking and to encourage them to develop their own interests stemming from the core learning.
- Provide students with timely feedback to support their progress, giving students time and opportunity to respond to this feedback and use it to improve their understanding and skill set.
- Review, reinforce and reflect upon their learning.

This also supports the teacher to:

- Assess student knowledge/understanding of a topic.
- Identify misconceptions.
- Formulate improvement targets for students.
- Support and inform planning.
- Consolidate independent learning skills of students.

Home learning is also designed to develop and consolidate independent learning skills in students in order to prepare them for the demands of the new GCSEs and for the pursuit of further and higher education. In order to support students in developing these skills, teachers should therefore ensure that home study activities are designed in the same manner as taught lessons in that they should:

- Have a clear learning outcome for the student in the sense that there is a clear consideration for how this study either reviews understanding of learning that has already taken place, how it will move understanding forwards, or for how it will prepare students to pre-learn the foundational knowledge of a concept they will study in the near future.
- Be clear how progress towards meeting the intended learning outcomes can be measured.
- Be specific, precise, clear and well structured.
- Be appropriate to the learning needs of the student - If the purpose of the home study is to review important concepts or extend students' understanding, every student will have different needs for review and/or extension.
- Provide adequate challenge to extend learning / consolidate skills developed.
- Support students to develop as independent learners.

We want our students to be active participants in their learning. We know that our working memory needs to develop pathways to retrieving information that is frequently required for assessments that occur some time after we have learnt information. By using concrete examples, dual coding, elaboration, interleaving, retrieval practice and spaced practice in the home learning we set, we will be effectively preparing students for lifelong learning and discourage them from forming ineffective study habits.

Types of Home Learning Tasks

The list below is not an exhaustive list of tasks that could be set for home learning, but rather an indication of the type of tasks that are appropriate. There is an expectation that students would receive a variety of tasks over time.

- Creative responses to the current or previous learning topic;
- Elaborative interrogation;
- Guided research with appropriate support at the start of the work, such as key websites or printed references;
- Practice testing (essay plans, multiple-choice questions, past papers);
- Preparation for future learning (such as reading ahead and summarising or previewing key information);
- Recall and retrieval practice;
- Rehearsal;
- Self-explanation;
- Structured short-answer, low-stake questions or quizzes to consolidate learning in lessons;
- Timed essays or extended pieces of writing;
- Vocabulary or key-facts learning;
- Wider reading tasks for enrichment or consolidation.

The Subject Area Home Study Policy

As part of departmental handbooks, all curriculum subject areas have a home learning policy, detailing:

- The frequency with which home learning will be set.
- How much home learning should be set?
- The place of home learning within Schemes of Learning.
- Differentiation of home learning tasks where necessary.
- Sanctions for unsatisfactory work or lack of completion.
- How and by whom home learning will be sampled and monitored.

It is therefore up to curriculum areas to decide upon the frequency at which home learning is set across both key stages. The focus should be on planning opportunities for home learning that closely meet the aims of the policy. Departmental Improvement Plans (DIPs) may include home study as an area for action and home learning and its impact are evaluated through the self-review process. It is good practice to plan, discuss and evaluate home learning at subject meetings on a regular basis.

Ongoing Independent Study

At Plashet School there is an expectation that where explicit home learning is not set by the teacher, each student will complete ongoing independent study in each subject. This might include the following:

- Arranging and consolidating classwork in preparation for examinations.
- Creating spaced learning resources in preparation for examinations – such as flashcards.
- Completing practice activities or past papers.
- Further research/reading to secure or extend subject knowledge.

Roles and Responsibilities

Student

- To listen to home learning instructions in the lesson and ask questions when unsure.
- To record the task set and deadline date into their planner.
- To discuss with the class teacher any difficulties they may be having prior to the deadline.
- To ensure that home learning is completed and handed in to meet the deadline.
- To attempt all work with a positive mind-set and give their best effort at all times.

Form Tutor

- To check that home learning is being recorded by the student.
- To check that the planner is being signed by the parent/carer.
- To note and respond to any comments written in planners by parents/carers.
- To inform the Year Coordinator/Subject teacher/Subject Leader/parent/carer of any concerns as appropriate.
- To support the YC/AYC in providing a support plan for any students encountering difficulties with home learning.

Year Coordinator/Assistant Year Coordinator

- To work with the member of the Leadership Team responsible for home learning to ensure the promotion of self-regulation skills such as setting an appropriate study environment, time management, managing distractions and dealing with negative emotions in order to complete home study in a timely and effective manner.
- To provide a support plan for any students encountering difficulties with home learning.

Subject Teacher

- Design home learning so that it has a purpose and impact on the expected progress of the student.
- Set home learning at the agreed frequency as detailed in the departmental hand book and Schemes of Learning.
- Give full and comprehensive instructions.
- Set deadlines for completed work and ensure that they are met.
- Differentiate home learning resources as necessary.
- Ensure adequate assessment and feedback opportunities for the home learning completed or integrate home learning into the learning session as appropriate.
- Provide help and support to ensure the successful completion of home learning by all students.

Curriculum/Subject Leader

- To ensure purpose and impact, the Curriculum/Subject Leader should seek to enhance the quality of home learning set through collaborative practice across the subject area.

- To monitor and evaluate the home learning set and the policy within their subject area and address any issues that might arise.
- To support subject teachers to set home study in accordance with subject area and whole school expectations.
- To evaluate the effectiveness and impact of home learning upon student progress as part of the self-review process

Leadership Team member with Responsibility

- To provide students, teachers and parents with supportive home learning documentation.
- To support Curriculum/Subject Leaders to develop classroom practice including the understanding of good practice in the design of home learning .
- To review the school home learning policy and provide updates as necessary for the Curriculum Committee as well as a three-year revision.
- To monitor and evaluate the school home learning policy.
- To monitor the quality of home learning set across the curriculum and address any issues that might arise.

Parents/Carers

- Providing a quiet place to work and supporting a regular study ethos.
- Negotiating with their child when home learning is to be done.
- Checking the time spent on individual tasks.
- Talking to their child about their home learning and supporting them to have pride in their learning.
- Checking their child's planner and signing it each week.
- Providing the school with information about any problems arising by contacting the school either through their child's planner or through the form tutor.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, students and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. Plashet recognises that AI has many uses to help students learn, but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism.

Students may use AI tools:

- As a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas.
- When specifically studying and discussing AI in schoolwork, for example in IT lessons or art homework about AI-generated images.
- All AI-generated content must be properly attributed.

Students may not use AI tools:

- During assessments, including internal and external assessments and coursework.
- To write their home learning or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work.
- Plashet School considers any unattributed use of AI-generated text or imagery to be plagiarism, and will follow our plagiarism procedures as set out in our sanctions system.