



Working together to promote & celebrate achievement

Home Study Policy

Revised and applicable from 5th March 2018

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Irene Papadopolou". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chair of Governors

Rationale

Home study 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 practicing study skills so that they might become autonomous learners. At Plashet School home study is a planned and integrated aspect of each curriculum area.

According to the work of John Hattie (2012), home study for secondary school students shows an effect size $d = 0.64$. On the basis of a 0.4 hinge point, home study for secondary students therefore has an above average effect on students learning.

At secondary level he suggests the highest effects are associated with rote learning, deliberate practice or rehearsal of subject matter; the more task-orientated the homework the higher the effects. Therefore, more specific and precise the design of the task is, the more likely it is to make an impact for all students.

Overall the studies tell us:

- Well-designed home study increases attainment.
- Home study needs to be clear and well structured. Putting students in a position where their home study is too complex, extended or unstructured to be done unsupervised reduces student's confidence in their own ability to learn.
- Home study that is more open or more complex is more appropriate for the ablest and older students. As students become more mature learners, activities should be developed to scaffold student's ability to learn and problem solve independently.

Ofsted Guidance

Ofsted (October 2017) define effective home study as '*challenging homework, in line with the school's policy and as appropriate for the age and stage of pupils, that consolidates learning, deepens understanding and prepares pupils very well for work to come.*'

This statement indicates a move to home study that clearly underpins and reviews the learning that takes place in the lesson in order to develop understanding on such a level that it informs learning in future years.

The aim of Home Study at Plashet School

Home Study at Plashet is designed to dovetail into both the curriculum and assessment policies in order to help ensure that every young woman 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 study 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 study 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.

Recommended approaches to Home Study

In order to meet the aims of home study at Plashet, it is recommended that teachers design home study opportunities that support our mastery approach to the curriculum by encouraging students to reflect upon and consolidate their learning, and that allows them to move their learning forwards so that their understanding of key concepts can be deepened within lesson time.

1. Self-testing

One method to achieve these aims is to design opportunities for self-testing. Self-testing fulfils several purposes:

- Allows students the opportunity to review their learning.
- Allows students to set learning goals enabling them to progress.
- Allows students to hone effective spaced repetition habits.
- Allows the teacher to review student understanding and therefore plan feedback that is valuable in assisting students to move forward.

The research of Dunlosky et al (2013) evidences clear links between regular practice testing and student performance and its suitability for students of all ages; self-testing home study therefore draws on an increasingly wide variety of subject knowledge as students' progress. Self-testing can be carried out in a variety of methods, for example through the use of knowledge organisers and study guides, with students being required to review the content and complete short activities designed to test their recall. This then allows the teacher to review and further test understanding through the use of strategies such as short responses quizzes and formative assessment activities. As students' progress through years 7 to 11, they are required to self-test knowledge learnt over an expanding period of time, with teachers planning opportunities to link the topics and concepts tested synoptically into other units of study. An example of such an approach is demonstrated in **Appendix A**.

2. Pre-learning content

As students mature, they can tackle increasingly open ended tasks designed to reflect synoptic approaches to learning, in order for them to be able to make links between different aspects of study. Therefore, reading tasks which require students to pre learn content supports our mastery approach to curriculum design at Key Stage 4. Pre reading can be given to students in a variety of formats, with the focus on how the reading is used within the lesson. When designing pre reading opportunities, teachers consider:

- How the reading supports the learning within class?
- How opportunities for reflection upon the content can be embedded into feedback.
- How opportunities for metacognition and synoptic thinking can be embedded into feedback to deepen students understanding of the knowledge they have read upon.

When designing opportunities for pre learning it is important that the task set for home study is closed in nature such as the reading and study of foundational knowledge that underpins a deeper concept. The knowledge gained from this activity is then developed in lesson time through the use higher order concepts to allow students to test and develop their understanding of the material in a variety of ways for example, through the use of decision making, problem solving or through applying a critical thinking or analytical approach to the material.

The Subject Area Home Study Policy

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

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

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

Ongoing Independent Study

At Plashet School there is an expectation that where explicit home study 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 study 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 study is completed and handed in to meet the deadline.
- To attempt all work with a growth mind-set and give their best effort at all times.

Form Tutor

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

Year Co-ordinator/Assistant Year Co-ordinator

- To work with the member of the Leadership Team responsible for home study 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 Study.
-

Class Teacher

- Design home study so that it has a purpose and impact on the expected progress of the student.
- Set home study 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 study resources as appropriate.

- Ensure adequate assessment and feedback opportunities for the home study completed or integrate home study into the learning session as appropriate.
- Provide help and support to ensure the successful completion of home study by all students.

Curriculum/Subject Leader

- To ensure purpose and impact, the Curriculum/Subject Leader should seek to enhance the quality of home study set through collaborative practice across the subject area.
- To monitor and evaluate the home study 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 study upon student progress as part of the self-review process

Leadership Team member with Responsibility

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

Parents

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

Evaluation

To be completed by the member of the Leadership Team with responsibility for Home Study on an annual basis to ensure the policy meets the needs of all stakeholders and reflects evidence based and up to date education practice and pedagogy.