

Title and Description	Independent Learning
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Date of last review	November 2025
Approved by	Local Governing Board: Quality of Education Sub-Committee
To be reviewed by	Local Governing Board: Quality of Education Sub-Committee
Responsibility	Deputy Headteacher (Quality of Education)
Review period	Annually
Date of next review	November 2026

Below is an AI generated summary of the full policy, produced to help make this document more accessible. The summary has been checked for accuracy, but the full policy remains the only completely accurate version.

1. What is Independent Learning?

Independent learning (homework) is designed to help your child:

- Develop good study habits for KS4 and KS5
- Apply and extend classroom learning
- Enjoy learning and take ownership of their progress

All tasks are set on **ClassCharts** and supported through the **Resource Hub** ([link](#)).

2. School Values and Independent Learning

Our approach reflects the school values:

- **Success for everyone:** Tasks build confidence and achievement
 - **Meeting all learners' needs:** Tasks are scaffolded and supported, including SEND support
 - **Celebrating effort:** Student efforts are recognised and rewarded
 - **Working together:** Parents, students, and teachers share responsibility for engagement
 - **Joy in learning:** Tasks are designed to be engaging, creative, and enjoyable
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3. KS3 Approach (Years 7–9)

Weekly & Fortnightly Tasks: Maths, reading, language, English, Science

Half-Termly Projects: Creative and subject-specific projects (History, Geography, Art, Music, Computing)

Time Commitment:

- **Year 7:** 5 hours/week
- **Year 8:** 6 hours/week
- **Year 9:** 7 hours/week

Key Features:

- Phased introduction of subjects in Year 7 to build good habits
- Emphasis on engagement, autonomy, and practical application
- Tasks include retrieval practice, revision, and enrichment

All tasks are set on **ClassCharts**, with support from teachers and the Resource Hub.

4. KS4 and KS5 Expectations

- **Years 10–11:** 10–12 hours/week
- **Years 12–13:** 1 hour of independent learning per taught hour

Tasks include coursework, revision, and retrieval practice, logged on Class charts for clarity.

5. Support for Students

- **Independent Learning Clubs:** Lunchtime sessions for IT access and guidance
 - **Departmental Support Sessions:** Extra help with tasks
 - **SEND Support:** Additional scaffolds, reasonable adjustments, and guidance for transition groups
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6. Rewards for Good Work

Effort and achievement are celebrated through **ClassCharts points**:

Regular celebrations recognise students who consistently meet high standards.

7. Missed or Incomplete Tasks

Step-by-step approach:

1. 15-minute departmental detention, -5 points
2. 30-minute departmental detention, phone call home
3. 1-hour Curriculum Leader after-school detention (Tuesday)
4. 2-hour Leadership after-school detention (Monday)

Key Messages for Students:

- Start tasks the day they are set
 - Deadlines must be met
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8. How Parents Can Help

- Check **Class charts** for set tasks
 - Support planning and revision at home
 - Encourage reading, flashcards, and engagement with projects
 - Use the **Resource Hub** for extra learning materials
 - Talk with your child about what they are learning in each subject
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9. Assessment Preparation

- Students follow an **Assessment Calendar**
- Revision is modelled in lessons and supported through homework
- Parents can help by discussing topics and encouraging effective revision

INDEPENDENT LEARNING POLICY

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- i. Provide clear guidelines on our approach to independent learning
- ii. Establish a consistent and coherent approach to independent learning
- iii. Clearly set out how and when independent learning practice will be monitored and evaluated
- iv. Support the approach set out in the Curriculum and Assessment policies, the overall ethos and values of the school (below) and the available evidence and thinking on effective independent learning

2. Our school values and Independent Learning:

Framwellgate School Durham: Ethos and Values Statement

Excellence, Compassion and Respect for All

Our school promotes academic excellence and embraces the shared values of honesty, integrity, respect and compassion. We want our students to be ambitious, kind, resilient and hardworking, and have a genuine passion for learning. We want them to change the world with the knowledge, skills and confidence they have learned here; to champion fairness, have friendships for life, and pride in our school. Above all, we want our students to be happy.

British Values

All staff are expected to uphold and promote fundamental British Values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

As with everything across school, it is important that our approach to independent learning aligns with the school values and supports the school's strategic improvement priorities.

Our school values	How this approach to independent learning aligns
Everyone in our community will know and experience success	We know that good independent study habits at KS4 and KS5 are critical to improving outcomes and there is evidence to support this but we also know that experiencing success is about more than just outcomes and well designed independent learning can provide opportunities for this.
We will meet the needs of all our learners	One of the greatest challenges with independent learning is to ensure that those learners with additional needs or challenges are supported- as soon as you take learning outside of the classroom and away from the teacher this is harder to achieve. This approach to independent learning is underpinned by the quality first teaching which ensures that students are not expected to do anything outside of lesson which hasn't already been secured, suitably scaffolded and rehearsed. The provision of the a/c homework club also further supports some of our learners.
Everyone here will be celebrated	The most critical thing when we set independent learning is that both the staff and the students value it . For students, they must feel as though

for who they are and what they do	their efforts are acknowledged and rewarded and for teachers they must be able to use this to inform their teaching.
We will achieve success together	Our approach to independent learning recognises the importance of 'buy-in' and engagement and has responded to the parental feedback. We acknowledge that there needs to be a common positive language around independent learning and that we will all need to work collectively to start to shift the culture.
Everyone will know and create joy	This approach to independent learning has at it's heart the aim to engage, enthuse and promote joy in learning . Independent learning can be the opportunity for students to really take their learning in different directions and can also be a way to engage parents in students' learning.

3. The Purpose of Independent Learning

The purpose of independent learning changes as a child progresses through their school life. We want our students to enjoy learning and see the value of learning beyond the classroom; we want students to develop a strong and disciplined work ethic and we want to help support students in being able to study independently. Independent learning can help to achieve all of these things, but it has to be carefully designed to ensure that it is both manageable and effective. It is also important that the independent learning tasks set do not cause students, and their families, a great deal of stress and which do not lead to progress in their learning.

4. The Research underpinning our approach to Independent Learning

- i) **5 months** of additional progress for secondary school pupils who regularly complete their homework (EEF, 2021. *Homework*)
- ii) Homework that is done with minimal effort or by copying the responses from elsewhere, whilst ticking the box for completion, will have no benefit on student outcomes. (Trautwein, 2006)
- iii) Cooper's meta-analyses, reviewing 120 studies drew three main conclusions:
 - Homework positively influences student academic achievement. The impact is stronger for secondary school pupils than primary.
 - Too much homework is counterproductive.

5. The setting of Independent Learning

Some subjects may set independent learning tasks every week, whilst others choose to set it over longer periods of time with more project-based tasks. All work will be set on Class charts for students and parents to access with clear deadlines for completion. Depending on the demands of the curriculum and age of the student, these demands may fluctuate at different times of the year. There is not a single type of independent learning task set by departments. Tasks can range from retrieval practice, flashcards, tasks extending students' knowledge, or building on work in class, but these will be consistent within departments and expectations will be clear. Students at GCSE and A Level will also be required to complete coursework outside of school.

6. Independent Learning for each Year Group

Appendix A presents the homework schedule for a student in Year 7, 8 and 9. This was developed in consultation with teaching staff as well as feedback from a parental focus group. A homework timetable has its limitations and restrictions but we felt it was important that students, parents/carers and teachers had a clear view as to the frequency of homework that would be set each half term. At KS4 the demands for independent learning obviously change and the message to students and parents is that they are expected to undertake approximately 10-12 hours of independent learning per week.

In Years 12 and 13 students are expected to do **1 hour of independent learning outside lessons for every 1 hour taught**. Teachers are asked to log all independent learning on Class

charts with a guide as to how long each task should take to allow monitoring of the consistency of this across the sixth form.

7. Rewards

High quality independent learning and a good work ethic will be praised in class. There is a real focus on celebrating the students' efforts and rewarding this with our achievement point system. Achievement points will be awarded through Class Charts for all independent learning tasks handed in and additional points will be given for outstanding work.

8. Support

Many curriculum areas offer lunchtime support sessions for independent learning where students can go to seek additional support. This is shared with parents/carers and students through the weekly slides. SEND students have additional support with independent learning through the use of the achievement centre's independent learning club where LSAs will be available to support students with their learning. Additional scaffolds are put in place when independent learning is set for some students and reasonable adjustments are made for students with SEND needs such as cognitive processes difficulties when setting retrieval tasks and expectations.

9. Sanctions/systems for non-completion

The following, consistent approach to non-completion of Independent Learning expectations will be in place:

- Step 1: If a student misses the deadline given on Class Charts they will receive -5 points and a 15 min break/lunchtime detention within that department. Detention will be recorded on Class Charts for parents and students.
- Step 2: If a student does not attend the 15 minute detention this is escalated to a 30min lunchtime detention within the curriculum area. A phone call home is made to the parents/carers to raise the concern.
- Step 3: If a student does not attend the 30 minute lunchtime detention this will be escalated to the Curriculum Leaders' afterschool detention on a Tuesday afterschool for 1 hour.

The DHT oversees the list of students who are expected to attend the afterschool leadership detention and contacts home where patterns emerge or puts plans in place to help address the problem.

There are two important messages which are clearly communicated to all staff, students and parents:

1. The deadline is the deadline
2. Start the homework the day it is set (This allows students to seek in-school support before the deadline)

10.Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Governing Board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and for reporting to Governors on any key issues arising from the implementation of this policy.

Appendix A:

What does homework look like for my child?

Year 7

	Weekly	Fortnightly	Half-termly (project)
Term 1a (Sept-Oct)	*Transition reading project		
Term 1b (Nov-Dec)	Sparx Reader (20 minutes) Sparx Maths (30mins)	English booklets (week1) (30 mins) Sparx Science (week 1) (30mins) Language vocab learning (week 2) (20 mins)	**History Geography Art
Term 2a (Jan – Feb)	Sparx Reader (20 minutes) Sparx Maths (30mins)	English booklets (week1) (30 mins) Sparx Science (week 1) (30mins) Language vocab learning (week 2) (20 mins)	RE
Term 2b (Feb – Mar)	Sparx Reader (20 minutes) Sparx Maths (30mins)	English booklets (week1) (30 mins) Sparx Science (week 1) (30mins) Language vocab learning (week 2) (20 mins)	**History Geography Art
Term 3a (Apr-May)	Sparx Reader	Half term preceding end of year assessments, all subjects will set revision based homework tasks. In lesson they will have the effective revision techniques modelled to them and revision homework will be set on Class Charts with support materials provided on Resource Hub.	
Term 3b (June-July)	Sparx Reader (20 minutes) Sparx Maths (30mins)	English booklets (week1) (30 mins) Sparx Science (week 1) (30mins) Language vocab learning (week 2) (20 mins)	**Music Computing

*Students will have the opportunity to get used to the demands of secondary school during this first half term. The only 'homework' they must complete will be to ensure that the summer reading book has been read and the transition tasks completed. Teachers will offer suggestions to students about what they might read/watch/explore to further extend their interest from the learning in lessons but there will be no compulsory homework during this first half term.

All homework tasks will be set on ClassCharts.

**These homework tasks have an emphasis on engagement and enjoyment; practical application of their learning. Carefully linked to the curriculum with an element of choice (autonomy) and they provide suitable scaffolding.

Year 8

	Weekly	Fortnightly	Half-termly (project)
Term 1a (Sept-Oct)	Sparx Reader (20 minutes) Sparx Maths (30mins)	English booklets (week1) (40 mins) Sparx Science (week 1) (30 mins) Language vocab learning (week 2) (20 mins)	**History Geography Art
Term 1b (Nov-Dec)	Sparx Reader (20 minutes) Sparx Maths (30mins)	English booklets (week1) (40 mins) Sparx Science (week 1) (30mins) Language vocab learning (week 2) (20 mins)	RE
Term 2a (Jan – Feb)	Sparx Reader (20 minutes) Sparx Maths (30mins)	English booklets (week1) (40 mins) Sparx Science (week 1) (30 mins) Language vocab learning (week 2) (20 mins)	**History Geography Art
Term 2b (Feb – Mar)	Sparx Reader (20 minutes) Sparx Maths (30mins)	English booklets (week1) (40 mins) Sparx Science (week 1) (30 mins) Language vocab learning (week 2) (20 mins)	Computing
Term 3a (Apr-May)	Sparx Reader	Half-term preceding end of year assessments, all subjects will set revision based homework tasks. In lesson they will have the effective revision techniques modelled to them and revision homework will be set on Class Charts with support materials provided on Resource Hub.	
Term 3b (June-July)	Sparx Reader (20 minutes) Sparx Maths (30mins)	English booklets (week1) (40 mins) Sparx Science (week 1) (30 mins) Language vocab learning (week 2) (20 mins)	

All homework tasks will be set on ClassCharts.

**These homework tasks have an emphasis on engagement and enjoyment; practical application of their learning. Carefully linked to the curriculum with an element of choice (autonomy) and they provide suitable scaffolding.

Year 9

	Weekly	Fortnightly	Half-termly (project)
Term 1a (Sept-Oct)	Sparx Maths (30 mins) Sparx Science (30 mins) Language vocab learning (20 mins)	English booklets (week1) (30 mins) Sparx Reader (week 2) (20 minutes) Non-core subjects will start to set homework tasks fortnightly	**History Geography Art
Term 1b (Nov-Dec)	Sparx Maths (30 mins) Sparx Science (30 mins) Language vocab learning (20 mins)	English booklets (week1) (30 mins) Sparx Reader (week 2) (20 mins)	RE Drama (Learning lines for assessment)
Term 2a (Jan – Feb)	Sparx Maths (30 mins) Sparx Science (30 mins) Language vocab learning (20 mins)	English booklets (week1) (30 mins) Sparx Reader (week 2) (20 mins)	**History Geography Art
Term 2b (Feb – Mar)	Sparx Maths (30 mins) Sparx Science (30 mins) Language vocab learning (20 mins)	English booklets (week1) (30 mins) Sparx Reader (week 2) (20 mins)	Computing
Term 3a (Apr-May)		Half-term preceding end of year assessments, all subjects will set revision based homework tasks. In lesson they will have the effective revision techniques modelled to them and revision homework will be set on Class Charts with support materials provided on Resource Hub.	
Term 3b (June-July)	Sparx Maths (30 mins) Sparx Science (30 mins) Language vocab learning (20 mins)	English booklets (week1) (30 mins) Sparx Reader (week 2) (20 mins)	

All homework tasks will be set on ClassCharts.

**These homework tasks have an emphasis on engagement and enjoyment; practical application of their learning. Carefully linked to the curriculum with an element of choice (autonomy) and they provide suitable scaffolding.