

Independent Learning Policy

**Approved by Governor committee:
Student & Curriculum – 26th November 2020**

**Date to be reviewed:
Autumn 2023**

**Responsibility of:
Vice Principal – Quality of Education**

**Date ratified by Governing Board:
N/A**

1. Introduction

At Chelsea Academy we strive to ensure that our curriculum develops students' ability to be resilient, reflective, resourceful and responsible learners. Together we work to ensure that learning transcends all aspects of academy life, which includes supporting, challenging and encouraging students to be independent, life-long learners. We value all aspects of the curriculum; academic, creative and vocational which is reflected in the extended learning opportunities for students through Independent Learning (sometimes referred to as IL) to be completed at home. We believe that Independent Learning forms a vital part of students' learning experiences. It embeds knowledge and skills acquired in class and provides young people with an opportunity to develop lifelong learning habits including critical thinking, independence, creativity, perseverance and initiative.

2. Why set Independent Learning?

- To develop inquisitiveness, providing opportunities for research
- To develop collaboration, by involving parents/carers and others in the learning process and so providing an important motivational function
- To encourage perseverance, by allowing students to develop their ability to work independently
- To develop discipline, by allowing consolidation of skills, knowledge and understanding previously learnt
- To encourage joy, creativity and opportunities to showcase work to peers and the wider academy community

3. Range of Independent Learning tasks

Independent Learning tasks could include any of the following forms (or others, this list is not exhaustive):-

- Research and investigation
- Exam questions
- Revision and assessment preparation
- Flipped learning – preparation for topics in lessons
- Directed reading
- Extended writing
- Drafting work
- Projects including coursework
- Preparing presentations
- Practising vocabulary/basic skills
- Rehearsing and roleplay
- Creating a piece of art
- Product design
- Assignments via online learning platforms

4. Further Guidelines

Independent Learning must be planned and focused to 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 assessment conditions.

- The purpose of an Independent Learning task must be made clear with careful consideration to appropriate scaffolds and modelled examples for students to achieve success.
- The quality of Independent Learning is more important than the quantity.
- Guidance for the amount of time that a student should spend on a task must be displayed on the assignment description set via google classroom with clear deadlines for submission.

- Independent Learning must be appropriate to the age and ability of students which are suitably challenging, engaging and support learning.
- Students should receive specific and timely feedback on Independent Learning tasks, this may be in the form of a class discussion, response to an assessment, peer assessment, self-assessment, immediate feedback through an online programme/platform or teacher assessment.
- Teachers should celebrate and reward success.
- Teachers must give a minimum of two days to complete a task and a second chance to hand in work if required.
- Parents should be informed if recurring problems arise with the completion of Independent Learning
- Curriculum leaders must ensure that Independent Learning opportunities are frequent* and with good quality assignments suggested within schemes of work.
- Curriculum leaders must ensure that the Independent Learning policy is monitored and applied by all class teachers.

** 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 week may be set fortnightly.*

5. Quality Assurance

Curriculum leaders/Assistant Principals monitor the quality, setting and completion of Independent Learning activities to ensure that it is in line with Academy policy. Monitoring Independent Learning is a key feature of the Academy's quality assurance processes.

6. Responsibilities

Students are responsible for:

- Using google classroom to help monitor and manage their Independent Learning tasks
- Completing work to the best of their ability
- Submitting work on time as instructed by their teacher
- Using google classroom features e.g. chat, stream to seek help from peers or their teachers

Subject teachers are responsible for:

- Using google classroom effectively in setting Independent Learning and supporting students as appropriate
- Setting clear and appropriate deadlines for the completion of work and ensuring that these deadlines are met recognising high quality work or effort through praise in class use of rewards
- Applying the academy's approach to setting sanctions and seek support from their curriculum leader as appropriate

Subject Leaders are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all subject teaching staff are using google classroom most effectively in the setting of Independent Learning
- Monitoring and reviewing the quality of Independent Learning being set and completed in their area
- Using departmental CPD time to share best practice and training as required

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing, where possible, the appropriate conditions in which students can quietly and successfully complete work
- Discussing and reviewing submissions of independent learning tasks to show interest and support for extended learning opportunities
- Reinforcing the value of independent study by giving positive feedback to their child