



Ark Isaac Newton Academy

Friday 11th November 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to you today to give you some more information around the Independent Learning (IL) strategy we are implementing this year which will inform you of the IL that students are going to be set in this half term. Independent learning is an integral part of education and raising achievement. As KS3-KS4 students only spend 12% of their time during a 12-month period in a classroom, we must seek to use independent learning as a valuable tool to aid our students' academic growth and passion for learning. We believe it promotes students' self-discipline and personal responsibility for learning and organisation. It reinforces learning in class, extends knowledge and understanding whilst giving students the opportunity to practice and refine skills specific to each subject. Research proves that home and independent learning has a positive effect on academic outcomes. Ultimately, at INA we believe in the integral role this learning plays in students surpassing their academic goals.

At INA we define independent learning in two parts:

- **Home learning (HL):** These are specific tasks that are to be completed at home, with support from parents/carers, and will be checked by staff. They aim to secure core curriculum content (or core knowledge).
- **Independent learning (IL):** These are tasks/activities that will help develop effective metacognition over time (building long term memory) and extend knowledge beyond the curriculum. These will not be checked by staff and students will take responsibility for completing these independently.

The first phase of our new policy is to share with all teachers, students, and parents/carers the HL timetable that all Year 8 students will be following this year. The timetable is below and shows the day of the week your child will be set their HL. Your child will have one week to complete each piece of HL and therefore it will be collected in on the same day to avoid confusion and aid planning and organisation. Each piece of HL for core subjects should take no longer than 45 minutes, and all other subjects should take about 30minutes each. Please communicate through your child's planner if HL is taking considerably longer than this.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday		
X1	Big Band*	Maths RE	Science History	Art Spanish	English Geography		
X2	History	Maths RE	Science Big Band*	Art Spanish	English Geography		
X3	Geography	Maths RE	Science Big Band* History	Art Spanish	English Computer Science		
Y1	History	Maths RE	Science	Art Geography Big Band*	English Spanish		
Y2	Geography	Maths Big Band*	Science	Art RE History	English Spanish		
Y3	History	Maths Spanish	Science	Art Geography Big Band*	English RE		
Big Band - Students are reminded that the minimum expectation for Big Band practice is three weekly 15 minute sessions.							
Computer Science HL will be set in the last week of each term							

For all subjects your child will be expected to write in their planner the content of the HL they will be completing that week, and this will be checked by their class teacher and form tutor. We ask you also check this. This will fall into one of the 4 types of HL that we know benefit students' studies: .

- Preparation – completing work ahead of an upcoming lesson or topic e.g. to learn key words or formula
- Practice – completing independent practice on topics that have been taught in class e.g. Hegarty tasks or written tasks in English
- Review and Revise – completing tasks which prepare students to upcoming assessments, and use their memories to link back to previous knowledge e.g. Create a mind-map answering the question – What was the impact of WW1 on Germany?
- Extend – this will require students to go beyond the content they have been learning in lessons e.g. Read and annotate the extract about the causes of WW2. Consider the extent to which the Treaty of Versailles played in the outbreak of another world war only 21 years after the Great War had ended.

To ensure you are aware of this half term's HL the table attached shows exactly what HL will be set to prepare your child for their upcoming interim assessment (commencing the week beginning 28th November) in all subjects.

If students need extra support completing HL then the library is open every lunchtime, and there is an after school club on Monday and Thursdays in the library where students can have a quiet space to complete HL and teacher support if needed.

We know that parents/carers and wider family members play a pivotal role in supporting our students with their HL. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their children complete their HL and are supported in doing so. Therefore, we are clear in the expectations we have for parents/carers in this respect, forming a key part of the home academy agreement.

- Provide a **peaceful place** in which their child can do their home and independent learning. Please note that students will have chances to work in a quiet space at the academy if this is required.
- **Check and sign their child's planner each week** with focus on ensuring they can visibly see academic deadlines being written down.

- **Regularly check their home learning exercise books** and any digital platforms they may be using. Furthermore, have a clear understanding of what they are studying using the parents/carers resources and the home/independent learning overviews.
- **Encourage and praise successful completion** of home learning they can be proud of.
- Parents/carers must communicate with their child's form tutor if there are any questions or concerns about the home learning being set. Be mindful of stress, "overwork/revision" and any other signs of mental health related issues.

Thank you for your continued support of your child, we hope by providing the timetable and the supporting materials that you can better support your child in their academic progress throughout their time at INA.

Yours sincerely,

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

Isabel Boanas Evans
Assistant Principal – Maths and Independent Learning