



Ark Greenwich Free School

GFS Independent Learning (IL) Standards

Research suggests that the impact of homework on learning is consistently positive and can lead to an average of **five months' additional progress**. However, the impact homework can vary depending on how it is set.

There is some evidence that **homework is most effective when used as a short and focused intervention** (e.g. In the form of a project or specific target connected with a particular element of learning). Benefits are likely to be less if homework is more routinely set eg learning vocabulary or completing problem sheets in mathematics every day (Education Endowment Foundation, 2018).

Evidence also suggests that how homework relates to learning during normal school time is important. Research shows that in **the most effective examples, homework is integral to the learning, not just an add on**. To maximise impact of homework, it is important that **students are provided with high quality and timely feedback on their work:**

“practice doesn't do much unless there is rapid feedback, and that's usually absent at home.” (Willingham, 2016)

Independent Learning (homework) is most effective when it involves practice or rehearsal of subject matter already taught. Students should typically **not** be exposed to new material to learn at home, unless they are deemed as 'expert learners'. Complex or open-ended homework is often completed least effectively; **short frequent homework which is monitored closely by teachers is likely to have a bigger impact**. This could include using graphic organisers, guided research, summarising notes, exam question practise, guided revision etc (Huntington Research School, 2017).

Homework is more effective for secondary school students because they are more able to self-regulate their learning and have more of a knowledge base to draw upon. Similarly, **high ability students typically benefit more from home learning more than low ability students** (Huntington Research School, 2017).

A recent study examining the correlation between time spent on homework and academic achievement showed that **homework completed by the student independently for 60-70 minutes a day had the biggest impact**. More than 90 minutes of homework a night was a negative impact on student's test scores (Institute for Effective Education, 2015).

WHAT MAKES HOME LEARNING EFFECTIVE?

Cathy Vatterott (2010) identified five fundamental characteristics of good homework: purpose, efficiency, ownership, competence, and aesthetic appeal.

1. **Purpose:** all homework assignments are meaningful & students must also understand the purpose of the assignment and why it is important in the context of their academic experience (Xu, 2011).
2. **Efficiency:** homework should not take an inordinate amount of time and should require some hard thinking.
3. **Ownership:** students who feel connected to the content and assignment learn more and are more motivated. Providing students with choice in their assignments is one way to create ownership.
4. **Competence:** students should feel competent in completing homework. In order to achieve this, it's beneficial to abandon the one-size-fits-all model. Homework that students can't do without help is not good homework.
5. **Inspiring:** A well-considered & clearly designed resource and task impacts positively upon student motivation.

(Huntington Research School, 2017)

GFS Independent Learning (IL) Standards:

1. In all written subjects* at KS3 and all GCSE subjects at KS4, pupils will receive *Independent Learning (IL)* typically once every 5-6 lessons. In subjects where work is not evidenced in books and often more practical** in nature, independent learning is received by pupils once every term
2. Teacher's will set quality homework over quantity
3. Homework timetables will not be used; teachers will set meaningful homework which links with the learning which has taken place in the lessons. Students will understand the purpose of the Independent Learning and why it is important in the context of their academic experience.
4. Timely feedback will be given in response to Independent Learning. This could be given in written or verbal form
5. Homework will be set on Google Classroom and written into students' planners. Teachers will ensure all students have access to resources for homework if they cannot access Google Classroom outside of school (please note Google Classroom will be used from January 2019).

**English, mathematics, science, geography, history, MFL*

***Computing, ICT, music, PE, drama and art*

Each department will have their own department Independent Learning policy which encompasses all of the five standards stated above.

Bibliography

Education Endowment Foundation (2018). *Homework (Secondary). Teaching & Learning Toolkit*. Available at: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/homework-secondary>

Huntington Research School (2017). *Homework: What Does The Evidence Say?* Available at: <https://huntington.researchschool.org.uk/2017/11/10/homework-what-does-the-evidence-say/>

Huntington Research School (2016). *Homework: Are We Asking The Right Questions?* Available at: <https://huntington.researchschool.org.uk/2016/11/03/homework-are-we-asking-the-right-questions/>

Institute for Effective Education (2015). *How much homework is too much?* Available at: <http://www.beib.org.uk/2015/04/how-much-homework-is-too-much/>

Lee, S (2018). *How all stakeholders helped redesign our homework process*. Available at: <https://www.ssaturk.co.uk/blog/redesign-homework/>

Vatterott, C (2010). *Five Hallmarks of Good Homework*. Available at: <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/summer11/vol68/num10/Five-Hallmarks-of-Good-Homework.aspx#>

Willingham, D (2016). *Important New Study of Homework*. Available at: <http://www.learningscientists.org/blog/2016/10/18-1>