Independent Study Policy

Vision

Teachers at Stockport Academy work very hard to ensure students receive exceptional teaching and learning experiences in the classroom. In order to ensure students reach their full academic potential and develop the skills to support life-long learning, appropriate Independent Study tasks are set to enhance their learning opportunities. By creating a culture where students take responsibility to extend their learning outside of the classroom, we are working towards our moral purpose of bringing out the 'best in everyone'.

Principles

➢ Entitlement- all students are entitled to access a curriculum that both inspires and challenges them to be their very best

➢ Mastery- all students build a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of what they have been taught over time

Independent study refers to any task or assignment a student completes in addition to timetabled lessons. This could be completed in a number of places including at home, in a co-curricular Independent Study club or in the library at lunchtimes and afterschool. Independent Study set is underpinned by Rosenshine's Principles[1] and our current understanding of cognitive science of learning: that it is a persistent change in our long term memory[2] . Evidence suggests students who regularly complete learning outside of the classroom are more likely to be successful in their GCSEs[3] develop good study habits and increase confidence in their ability.

Intent

We will:

➢ Encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning outside of the classroom and use a variety of resources to extend their understanding

➢ Provide opportunities for students to practice and apply recent learning from lessons

➢ Allow students to actively retrieve knowledge of previous topics to strengthen connections between the material they have learned

➢ Develop students' ability to apply knowledge to unseen scenarios

➢ Provide information for teachers to identify any misconceptions in understanding that can be addressed in lessons

➢ Support students in developing effective independent learning skills including the ability to manage their time and resources

➢ Ensure students become self-regulated learners who are aware of their own strengths and weaknesses and can motivate themselves to improve their learning

Implementation

We will:

➢ Set Independent Study according to the Independent Study timetable

- In Key Stage 3 students are set Independent Study weekly in Core Subjects (English, Maths and Science) as well as MFL and Geography
- In Key Stage 4 students are set Independent Study weekly in all subjects

➢ Set KS3 Independent Study via an online platforms (Sparx, Seneca and Language Nut). All tasks will be chosen to review prior learning in line with the Scheme of Learning

➢ For KS4, set tasks that are appropriate for each subject e.g. project based tasks for some practical subjects such as art. Tasks should review prior learning, prepare students for external examinations or provide opportunities for extended independent practice

➢ Record all Independent Study set on Arbor that students and parents can access to keep track of the tasks due

➢ Daily notifications on Arbor to remind students and parents when Independent Study is due (24 hours before the deadline)

➢ Provide feedback on tasks either through marking or within lessons when teachers have reviewed any misconceptions and actively address these

➢ Endeavour to provide chromebooks for students where available to support students to work from an appropriate device at home

➢ The Academy will ensure that Independent Study is accessible to all students and will make reasonable adjustments where required in line with the Equality Act 2010.

➢ Teachers will take account of the needs of students with special educational needs and disabilities when setting Independent Study, in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

➢ Provide access to Independent Study clubs and the library at the end of the day to ensure all students have a quiet place to work and are able to access support

➢ Recognise the achievements of students completing Independent Study regularly through House Points and regular rewards

➢ Set sanctions when Independent Study is not completed, such as detentions to complete the missing work. Where failure to complete Independent Study is occurring regularly, parents will be informed by telephone or letter and may be invited into school to support their child in meeting the school's expectations

Impact

Students will:

➢ Increase their depth of learning by extending their learning beyond the classroom

➢ Increase their engagement with online websites and apps in their own time to support their learning

➢ Understand how to successfully prepare for assessments and examinations and reflect on their learning

➢ Develop resilience, an appreciation of learning and independent learning skills which they can link to the 'Future Me' and Education with Character

We will:

➢ Use completion data to celebrate achievement and intervene to arrange support for students where necessary

➢ Use Independent Study as a tool to support progress and attainment in each subject including to practice any developing skills or address any gaps in knowledge identified in assessments or examinations

➢ Ensure that student engagement with Independent Study is high with key groups monitored e.g. engagement of pupil premium students, so that Independent Study can be used as a tool to reduce the attainment gap Monitoring and Quality Assurance

To monitor the impact of Independent Study we will:

➢ Record the completion of Independent Study on Arbor

➢ Review the consistency and quality of Independent Study set by Curriculum Area Leads carrying out regular checks of Arbor and reviews of student workbooks

➢ Cross reference data from assessments and any mock examinations with completion of Independent Study tasks

➢ Regularly review the Independent Study process and gather the views of teachers, students and parents and take appropriate action in response

➢ Use the data collected to inform further improvement to Independent Study and ensure that it is monitored closely by the Academy's leadership team through live trackers

Parent/student responsibilities

Students are expected to complete Independent Study on time and to a high standard and ask their teachers for help and support should they need it. Students should inform their class teacher if they cannot access a website or app used for Independent Study so that this can be addressed promptly. Students can also use these online tools to set their own learning tasks which is particularly beneficial when revising for any assessments or examinations.

Where possible, parents should support their children by checking Independent Study on Arbor and checking that the tasks are being completed. Parents are encouraged to share any concerns or views, as appropriate, in relation to Independent Study.

Senior Leadership Team responsibilities

The Senior Leadership Team will monitor priorities and targets for improvement, at whole-school level, based on evidence gained from monitoring procedures. The Senior Leadership Team will track progress against the Academy improvement plan, hold teachers accountable and will take appropriate action, if necessary, where Independent Study requires improvement or is considered to be inadequate. Monitoring and evaluating the impact of Independent Study will principally take place through Curriculum Line Management, Departmental and whole-school reviews, observations, Learning Looks and Book Look systems. The Senior Leadership Team will regularly review the school's Independent Study policy and internally monitor the effectiveness and implementation of the policy.

Governor responsibilities

The Local Governing Body will ensure that the Principal and the staff implement this policy rigorously and robustly. The Local Governing Body will hold the Principal, and the Senior Leadership Team, accountable for the quality of Independent Study. They will be regularly updated through its regular meetings.

References

(1) Rosenshine, B. (2012). Principles of Instruction. American Educator. Available from: Principles of Instruction: Research-Based Strategies That All Teachers Should Know, by Barak Rosenshine; American Educator Vol. 36, No. 1, Spring 2012, AFT

(2) Ofsted. (2025). School inspection Toolkit, Operating Guides and Information. Available from: School inspection: toolkit, operating guides and information - GOV.UK

(3) Sammons et al. (2014). Influences on students' GCSE attainment and progress at age 16: research report. Available from: Department for Education

(4) Education Endowment Foundation (EEF). Homework: Teaching and Learning Toolkit. Available from: **https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/homework**

(5) The use of online learning platforms will comply with the Academy's Data Protection Policy and applicable data protection legislation.

Agreed by Stockport Academy LGB October 2026

Review: October 2027

Signed by Chair of LGB _____

David Robinson (Chair)

Signed by Principal

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Janine McCann (Principal)