

Subject: Key Stage 4 Homework at Wey Valley Academy

I am writing to share our approach to homework at Key Stage 4 and, in particular, the important role that regular independent study plays as students work towards their GCSEs.

At Wey Valley, we believe that homework should be purposeful, manageable and closely connected to learning in the classroom. At Key Stage 4, this becomes particularly important as students need regular opportunities to consolidate their knowledge, practise applying what they have learned and prepare independently for examinations. Our homework guidance is designed to support this without creating unnecessary workload for students or families.

At Key Stage 4, all subjects will set homework weekly. Homework will normally take up to 45 minutes to complete, depending on the subject and the task.

Homework will focus on two key areas:

- Consolidating and retrieving knowledge and skills taught in lessons
- Independent exam practice, helping students to apply their knowledge and develop confidence with GCSE-style questions and tasks.

We want students to develop the habit of regularly revisiting what they have learned rather than waiting until the weeks before their exams to begin revising.

Building good independent learning habits

One of the most important things students can develop at Key Stage 4 is the ability to work independently.

Our experience at Wey Valley is that students who develop good routines, regularly consolidate their learning and begin preparing for examinations early are better placed to make the most of their time and demonstrate what they know. Homework is one part of helping students to develop these habits.

We therefore encourage students to begin building a regular routine of reviewing their classwork, revisiting key knowledge and completing independent practice from the beginning of their GCSE courses.

Wey Valley Academy

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We also recommend that students purchase relevant revision guides for their GCSE subjects, where these are available and recommended by the department. These can provide a useful resource for revisiting knowledge and preparing for assessments.

Arbor – keeping everything in one place

All homework will be recorded by teachers on Arbor, so parents and carers will be able to see what has been set, when it is due and what students are expected to do.

Students can also access their homework through the Arbor Student App.

The Student App is a useful tool for helping students take greater responsibility for their learning, although having the app is not essential. Teachers will continue to tell students about homework in person, and homework will be set and collected on consistent days wherever possible.

Some subjects may use platforms such as Sparx or Seneca, but the homework will still be recorded and signposted through Arbor.

Supporting students without overloading them

We are very mindful that our Year 10 and Year 11 students are still young people, and that their wellbeing is just as important as their academic progress. Our aim is never to overwork students or create unnecessary pressure, but to help them develop positive and sustainable learning habits without becoming overwhelmed.

Homework is an important part of this approach. It gives students regular opportunities to consolidate their learning, practise independently and build confidence as they prepare for their examinations. However, we recognise that students can sometimes find the demands of school and homework difficult to manage.

If a student is struggling or beginning to feel overwhelmed, please encourage them to speak to their subject teacher in the first instance or contact a member of our pastoral team. We want to make sure that students feel supported and that we can put the right support in place when needed.

Our priority is for students to develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed while maintaining a healthy and balanced approach to their learning and wellbeing.

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We want to recognise students who develop positive homework habits. Students will receive +5 House Points for completing homework and, where appropriate, -5 House Points for non-completion.

We also recognise that there will be occasions when students need additional time. Staff will use professional judgement in circumstances such as absence, exceptional circumstances, difficulties that have been communicated to school or a reasonable request for additional time.

Our aim

Homework is an important part of GCSE learning. It gives students regular opportunities to consolidate, practise and apply what they have learned, while helping them develop the independent study habits they will need as they move towards their examinations.

Our aim is not to give students more work for the sake of it, but to help them build good habits early, make the most of the learning they do in school and feel prepared for their exams. We also want students to achieve their best while maintaining a healthy balance and avoiding unnecessary pressure.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us to develop confident, independent learners and in encouraging students to make the most of their opportunities at Key Stage 4.

Yours Sincerely



Laura Bucke

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