



# HOE VALLEY SCHOOL

## INDEPENDENT STUDY POLICY

Person Responsible: Deputy Headteacher  
Date Adopted: Autumn 2020  
Date of last review: Autumn 2025  
Date of next review: Autumn 2027

*To be read in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning Policy, and Assessment Policy*

### 1. WHAT IS INDEPENDENT STUDY?

Independent study is a form of education where students take responsibility for their own learning with guidance from an instructor. This can include individual revision, homework, and other activities where the student works outside of a traditional classroom setting. It requires learners to be self-motivated, organised, and engage with learning materials and resources independently from their teachers.

### 2. WHY IS INDEPENDENT STUDY IMPORTANT?

Hoe Valley School believes that independent study is a vital part of the curriculum because it focus on key areas such as

**Student-led:** The student takes ownership of their learning by managing their time, and choosing how to engage with the material.

**Consolidation of learning:** Ensures students consolidate learning from work done in class to ensure long term memory accessed

**Instructor guidance:** While it's independent, a teacher will typically provide guidance, setting out the learning and evaluating the work, often in classroom settings

**Course of study:** It can be a way to explore a topic not covered in a traditional curriculum, alternating between traditional pedagogical methods and approaches such as 'flipped learning' (Bergmann & Sams, 2007)

**Skill development:** It helps develop crucial skills like critical thinking, self-motivation, and organisation, which are essential for success in education and beyond.

**Work Ready:** Students are prepared for higher education and or the 'world of work' by developing those vital skills organisation, time management etc.

### 3. ENTITLEMENTS

All students from Years 7 to 11 have one lesson of timetabled "Independent Study" per fortnight within the school day. Students are expected to complete a significant amount of their independent

study at home; their single timetabled independent study lesson should be seen as an opportunity to seek guidance on approaches to learning from the supervising teacher. This also pays dividends when students are expected to revise for their mock and final exams, which simply cannot be achieved in school alone.

#### **4. REWARDS & SANCTIONS**

Students will be rewarded for excellent learning behaviours during a designated independent study lesson – see the Behaviour for Learning policy. Additionally, completion of high quality independent work will be rewarded by the student’s classroom teacher and could include:

- House points
- Verbal and written praise
- Post card or phone call home (for sustained effort during Independent Study lessons)

As in the world of work, there are consequences when deadlines are not met or when work is not completed to a satisfactory standard (if help is not sought). If students do not complete intended work and have not attempted to resolve any issues they have found with this they will receive a sanction which is logged on Edulink. The sanction is at the discretion of the teacher, but may include a detention and should also include a phone call home, should it be a regular occurrence.

#### **5. WHAT KIND OF INDEPENDENT STUDY WILL BE SET?**

Independent study for years 7 & 8 will be set in EBACC subjects once a week approx. - 30minutes max per subject, per week. Independent tasks should be carefully planned and directed & reviewed by each Faculty lead, such that students have the same high-quality experience. All independent tasks should have a rationale behind them in terms of developing high-quality long-term memory, skills or learning behaviours. This could include self-quizzing using knowledge organisers, exam questions, Google Form quizzes or practice calculations for example. Whatever is set, should receive Acknowledgement from the teacher and personalised feedback may be given.

Independent learning for years 9, 10 & 11 is one hour per week per subject. HoFs have the freedom to direct their Faculties to set forms of study that are most suited to success in their own GCSE area. This could be a combination of self-quizzing using knowledge organisers, practice GCSE questions and whatever else is necessary within a teacher’s specific subject area. Teachers set independent study tasks at the beginning of the lesson, which is then written into the Google Classroom which feeds into the student’s Google Calendar. Teachers set work that does not require the teacher supervising independent study lessons to deliver the learning.

## 6. SUMMARY OF INDEPENDENT STUDY TIMINGS

| Year | Subjects | Duration/Subject | Hand in Time                             | Home Working                                                                              |
|------|----------|------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7-8  | EBACC    | 30Minutes        | Weekly                                   | Increasing as the terms progress                                                          |
| 9-11 | All      | 1 hour           | At the discretion of the Head of Faculty | A maximum of 1 hour a night should be expected (alongside their own independent revision) |

## 7. WHAT WILL INDEPENDENT STUDY LESSONS LOOK LIKE?

It is expected that students come prepared to work independently during this time, ensuring they know what it is they need to complete and that they have the resources and equipment necessary to complete it. Where a student has completed all their independent study tasks and have nothing further to do in an independent study session, they should complete additional numeracy work on Dr Frost, continue to read their current book or use SENECA learning to consolidate the current learning in one of their subjects.

All independent study lessons should have periods of silence to ensure that all students are able to make the best possible use of the time they are given in School to complete this work.

The supervising teacher delivering the lesson will be available to provide support and guidance, but it should be noted that they will likely not necessarily be a subject specialist for the tasks that have been set. It is important, therefore, that students ensure they are completely clear about what it is they need to do before they attend an independent study lesson. Students may use their Chromebooks during independent study sessions at the discretion of the teacher delivering the session. Students are permitted to use headphones during Independent Study as some Independent Study may require them to watch tutorial videos or similar.

## 8. HOW CAN PARENTS HELP THEIR CHILDREN?

Hoe Valley School recognises that the support of parents is vital regarding the child's progress. Our expectation of parents is that they should:

- Visit the school website / curriculum pages to see what topic students are currently following
- Check their child's Google Classroom, where appropriate, whilst prioritising independent study
- Provide a study space in the family home where independent study can be completed with minimal distraction
- Contact the school if they are concerned with the setting of Independent study (see Parental Complaints Policy)