



January 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

Independent Learning - Knowledge organisers (KO)

I am delighted to inform you that this term we will be launching our new independent learning strategy. The benefits of independent learning are well documented in research and include:

- Consolidating and extending work covered in class
- Preparing for new learning activities
- Accessing resources not available in the classroom
- Developing research skills
- Enhancing study skills such as planning, time management and self-discipline
- Taking ownership and responsibility for learning.

Our new strategy is based on a wide range of feedback from parents, students and staff and aims to consolidate the link between home learning tasks set by teachers and progress made in lessons. Across a range of subjects students will be receiving documents called 'knowledge organisers'. A knowledge organiser is a tool which sets out for both teachers and students exactly what knowledge is vital in the curriculum. The knowledge organisers will be given to students at the beginning of every new topic and will contain everything they need to know about the new unit of work. In Maths students will continue to be set tasks on MathsWatch.

Students will also be given a 'knowledge Folder' in which to collate all of their Knowledge Organisers from each subject. They will also be given a 'Practice Book' in which they will complete their independent learning tasks.

Students will be expected to keep their Knowledge Organisers, Knowledge folders and Practice Books safe and presented neatly. If they lose any of their study resources, or fail to bring them to school they will receive an intervention session with their class teacher or form tutor.

Teachers will tell students which sections of the knowledge organisers they need to be reading and learning each week. Students will record this in their planners. Copies of the knowledge organisers will also be on the school website on the relevant departmental pages. Each evening students will be expected to spend the appropriate amount of time studying and completing their study to the highest quality possible.

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When completing independent learning tasks students should follow the procedure set out below. *The focus is on learning and recalling essential information from the topics they are studying.*

1. *Read through the relevant section of the Knowledge Organiser, as directed by the classroom teacher.*
2. *Copy out the information within the relevant section of the Knowledge Organiser. Then copy this information out again for a second time. All work must be done in practice books.*
3. *Students then cover up the work/Knowledge Organiser and attempt to copy out the information from memory.*
4. *They then now must correct spelling mistakes and anything they have missed when writing by memory by using a different coloured pen.*

Each week students will complete retrieval quizzes during lessons. These will test their knowledge and understanding of the key concepts they have been revising through their knowledge organisers.

Expectations of retrieval practice

- In all subjects students will be set 10 questions a week. The questions will focus on the retrieval of knowledge which you have been studying over the course of the term.
- 60-80% of the questions will be focused on recent knowledge. 20-40% of the questions will require the retrieval of older knowledge
- Knowledge checks must take place in examination conditions – students will not be allowed to look back at prior work.

What are the consequences of not meeting independent learning expectations?

If students complete the independent learning tasks and progress well on 'retrieval' quizzes they will be rewarded through PARS.

If however independent learning is not completed in Practice Books and/or inadequate progress is evidenced in class quizzes – class teachers will issue an intervention session. This can be a detention set by the teacher to work with students on addressing gaps in knowledge or a mandatory study session after school. Attendance will be monitored and students who fail to attend will be dealt with in accordance with our detention escalation procedures.

If you would like further information on our independent learning strategy, please do contact me here at school via kvause@newarkacademy.co.uk

With kind regards



Mrs Katie Vause

School Leader (Teaching & Learning)