

Hayle Academy

27 March 2018

Dear Parent/carer

We are constantly striving to improve our impact on the learning and progress of our students and, as I have alluded to previously, we have introduced a number of positive changes at Hayle Academy since September. One of our more innovative changes has been the introduction of the Book of Knowledge which forms the basis of our homework policy in Years 7-9.

We had identified an issue with many students progress to be a general lack of understanding of key concepts and terminology. Students need to know a large number of basic facts to be able to fully access the curriculum. These facts are the foundations of our knowledge. We should make certain that students learn and revise these definitions and concepts continually from Year 7 onwards. The Book of Knowledge and its use at Key Stage 3 ensures that these basic facts and definitions can be learned.

A great deal of research has gone into the effectiveness of homework. Research suggests that, up to the end of Key Stage 3, homework is largely ineffective in its more traditional forms of worksheets and questions. Homework is effective at Key Stage 3, however, if it is self-reliant and based on simple self-quizzing. The effectiveness increases at Key Stage 4 when questions are used and good feedback is given. The Book of Knowledge is not a brand new concept; it has been used to great effect in other schools and is sometimes known as a Knowledge Organiser.

The effectiveness of the Book of Knowledge can only be maximised with help from parents and carers, you form a vital part of the education of your child. Working together we can make sure that the simple, basic facts that students desperately need to know to perform well at GCSE are learned early on at Hayle Academy.

I would ask that you follow some simple steps to allow us to make sure that this has maximum impact on progress.

- All students should spend in the region of 1 hour every weekday night using the Book of Knowledge. They can follow the Individualised homework timetable that has been prepared for them.
- Sometimes it can be difficult to motivate a young person to attempt homework if it is not directed (like a worksheet to complete or some questions to answer). If you are finding it difficult to encourage your child to spend the hour with the Book of Knowledge please contact your child's form tutor who will be able to speak to them on a one to one basis.
- If you can, spend some time with your child looking into the Book of Knowledge and help them by quizzing them about the content. It has been put together specifically with this in mind.

To help with the use of the Book of Knowledge, we will be producing a help booklet containing techniques and strategies that work best with this type of learning. This will be made available after the Easter break.

The launch of the Book of Knowledge has been a great success and has been commended by a number of other schools and our Child Psychologist partners. In order for it to have an impact on our students we need you to help us to make sure students are prepared for the rigors of the GCSE examination.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr P. Graham

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