

Hayle Academy



Helping with Homework





Hayle Academy

Helping Students with their Homework

Every year our parents and carers want to know how to help their children be more successful in school, and homework is the one topic that seems to get the most attention. This is understandable since homework is the one element of education that all parents see every day.

This booklet aims to provide our parents and carers with information about our school homework policy, so that you can help your child get the most out of their homework. It contains sections from the school homework policy; some frequently asked questions and answers, and some suggested approaches to the 'Book of Knowledge'.

CONTACTING SCHOOL

Parental involvement is essential to supporting the importance of doing homework. You may feel it is necessary to consult with your child's teacher when it comes to homework and how best you can help to make the activity a success.

If you feel it necessary to contact school with a view to discussing homework in general, please contact your child's Head of School.

If you have a subject specific issue, please contact the relevant Head of Faculty or specific subject teacher/form tutor.

Heads of School:

Mr J Clatworthy – Head of Upper School - Jonathan.Clatworthy@hayleacademy.net

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Heads of Faculty:

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FAQ's



The following are some common questions our parents and carers ask and some answers that I hope will help ensure that your child gets the most out of their school experience.

Q: Why do students need homework?

A: Homework serves a very purposeful role in the learning process — it establishes the link between school and home. Establishing this link in a child's development helps to strengthen their understanding that learning extends well beyond the walls of the classroom. Indeed, learning is an everyday, lifelong affair. Homework helps children to create a greater knowledge of a topic and of basic facts. Homework is also about instilling responsibility in a student; it promotes an array of character building qualities like accountability, trustworthiness, dependability and life skills.

Q: I want to support my child as they do homework, but I don't think I have the knowledge to do so. What can I do?

A: The use of the 'Book of Knowledge' gives parents and carers a perfect opportunity to continue supporting as students transfer from primary to secondary school. The book can be used to quickly test understanding of basic facts and concepts even if you don't feel confident with the subject matter. As your child moves further through the school and into their GCSE's, you may feel unable to offer support with homework, whether it's because you don't understand the material yourself or you're not sure how to explain it. A conversation with your child's teacher about specific subjects is the best possible source for help. Additionally, the school's library, public libraries and education websites (*such as BBC GCSE Bitesize*) offer a multitude of tools for parents and carers who want to help their children.

Q: What is the best time of day for homework? Is there a time my child should always avoid?

A: Children should aim to do homework at the same time every day, but barring special circumstances, they should not do their homework right before bed when they are tired. You need to select a consistent time that fits best into your child's schedule. Know that in some circumstances this time may have to change depending on the time of the year and commitments to other outside activities. To help guide good homework habits, it is recommended setting up an area that is specifically meant for studying and turning off the television/devices during homework time. Consistency is perhaps the best rule of thumb. Remember, good practices can be habit-forming if reinforced through repetition. Adhering to a set schedule or specific time helps build a strong foundation for future practice.

Q: My child has so much to do after school, pushing homework later into the day when they are tired. How can I make this situation better?

A: Remember that other activities, such as sports, dance and band, are *extra-curricular*. While it is important for children to explore their creativity and talents outside of academics, these activities should never become so overwhelming that

homework cannot be completed on a consistent basis and well before bedtime. If your overscheduled child is unable to complete homework, they may need to stop some outside activity. Homework should be a high priority.

Q: How can I make learning part of our evening routine when either no or very little homework has been set?

A: This is no longer the case with the implementation of the 'Book of Knowledge'. Homework timetables are provided, outlining the expectations for each year group. Our Home-School homework site will be used by the classroom teacher to upload homework that has been set. For Years 7-8, any additional time that has been allocated should be spent on the 'Book of Knowledge' and their Accelerated Reading book. For Years 9-11, again the 'Book of Knowledge' can be used as an additional resource alongside the recommended interactive revision apps and websites (refer to page 6). There should never be a time where a student has 'No Homework' as there is a 'Book of Knowledge' to learn or there are exams to prepare for.

Q: What is a sensible and realistic way for me to reinforce the importance of doing homework when it is set?

A: Just like adults, children like to know when they have done a good job. Therefore, praise is very important because it establishes an intrinsic, self-motivating reward for doing what is asked. While good grades and feedback in the classroom help push students toward success, these same types of reinforcements are equally important at home. Even if it is just a simple acknowledgement, your child needs to know that you are aware of, and appreciate, their hard work. It is also important to stay involved and interested in your children's education. If you consistently ask them about homework and expect to see what they are doing, you will create expectations that they will likely strive to meet. Most importantly, lead by example. If you have a job that requires doing work from home, model the same guidelines you set for your child.

Q: What happens if my child does not complete homework?

A: We strongly believe that homework plays a fundamental role in helping our students to make good progress in their learning and develop as responsible, independent learners, building on their skills of self-regulation and self-management. With this in mind, the completion of homework will be monitored by teaching staff. A report to parents will be issued using the Progress Review document. It will give an indication of the student's completion rate:

- 4 = always complete.
- 3 = complete with a few exceptions.
- 2 = sometimes completed.
- 1 = rarely or regularly not attempted (a substantial number not complete).

If this applies, please respond to reports of non-completion of homework by discussing this with your child and encouraging them to improve.

If a student fails to attempt or to complete homework, the teacher will:

- Inform parents/ carers by telephone if they see a pattern of non-completion developing;
- Record as a demerit on SIMS, which will allow the tutor to identify and work with students with homework issues across several subjects,
- Remind the student of the importance of completing homework and recommend attending a homework support session;
- Report on completion rate over time via the Progress Review.

Homework detentions **will not** be set. Instead, the focus will be on **positive reinforcement** for the completion of high quality homework and a good work ethos.

You can access the homework site to view homework that has been set. We feel that homework is work that should be completed at home; please reinforce this message with your child. It is the responsibility of home to ensure that it is completed.

Positive reinforcement will include:

- Sensitive use of praise within the classroom
- Use of merits
- A text message home
- A postcard home
- A Headteacher commendation award nomination for an exceptional piece of homework
- Celebration of student homework on display in the classroom (when appropriate), which also acts as a model of expectations and standards
- Other incentives – please watch this space for more!

Organising Homework

We believe that all students should set time aside each evening to do their homework. With this in mind, we have produced a homework timetable for Years 7-8 and separate timetables for Year 9 and Years 10-11. All homework set will be identified on the home-school homework site.

Teachers will not set homework to be completed for the next day, but will give students at least two days to complete the homework. This will be the case except in **exceptional** circumstances.

Years 7-8

Suggested homework time:

- 20 mins. per subject highlighted on the timetable.



It is envisaged that there will be 2 or 3 subjects per night. Any additional time should be spent on the 'Book of Knowledge'.

Homework that is set to consolidate learning in the classroom may include skills-based activities, extended writing, preparation for assessments or project-based work.

Students are expected to learn the whole of the 'Book of Knowledge' throughout their time here at Hayle Academy, so they can pick and choose which areas of each subject they concentrate on to complete their time allocation for homework. On some occasions, teachers might suggest particular topics to look at if they feel there is a need in this area or if there is a particular topic they want to focus on.

In addition, your child has their Accelerated Reading Book, which they should be encouraged to read daily. They also have access to the PiXL Maths app and MathsWatch website to help to build on their numeracy skills during their time allocated for homework.

Year 9

Suggested homework time:

- 30 mins. per subject highlighted on the timetable.



It is envisaged that there will be up to 3 subjects per night. The GCSE courses start in Year 9, so homework will focus on exam-style questions or revision based in preparation for the GCSE assessments. Again, the 'Book of Knowledge' can be used as an additional resource.

Years 10-11

Suggested homework time:

- Up to 40 mins. per subject.

It is envisaged that there will be 2-3 subjects per night on the timetable. Students will be expected to complete the work set in a given timeframe.

Homework will focus on exam-style questions and tasks in preparation for the demands of the GCSE exams and external assessments.

Re-visiting of the students' prior learning for GCSE is critical and this can be achieved through a number of on-going revision strategies. There are a number of PiXL revision apps that we recommend to support your child's GCSE revision, including:

- PiXL Maths, PiXL Lit, PiXL History and PiXL Geog apps.
- https://quizlet.com/PiXL_GCSE
- MathsWatch
- Educake – Science
- Tassomai - Science
- Maths Genie



Educake Science
Online Homework and Revision

Support for students

Not all homework is done at home; in fact, for some students who find it hard to work at home, or for some tasks which may require resources (books, software, equipment) more readily available at school, it is necessary or desirable to carry out the task at school. With this in mind, the library is available from 8.15am and until 4.15pm. Additional printing facilities are being purchased to support the printing of work completed electronically. An additional homework breakfast facility will shortly be launched in the canteen – further information to follow.

Students' responsibilities

- Students should make sure they stick to the prepared timetable.
- Students should always carry their 'Book of Knowledge' with them as it is part of their essential equipment.
- Students need to accept that deadlines must be kept.
- If students are absent, they have an opportunity to learn facts and concepts from the 'Book of Knowledge'. They must also catch up if additional homework has been set.
- Problems with homework should be resolved before the deadline. If students need any further clarification, they should see the member of staff concerned for help.
- Students should take pride in doing their best.

It is the responsibility of the student to pick up any homework missed due to absence. Please use the pink catch-up card provided by their tutor.

School's responsibilities

- To produce a useful and accurate 'Book of Knowledge' and to make sure all students are supplied with one.
- To produce appropriate timetables for all years.
- To provide support sessions for students who struggle to complete their homework.
- The subject teacher is responsible for setting appropriate homework and appropriate exam preparation homework higher up the school. This will be uploaded by the subject teacher to the school's homework site.
- Teachers should ensure, wherever possible, that students have more than one night in which to complete their homework. This allows students to plan their time, participate in out of school activities if they wish, and still be able to do their homework.
- Heads of Faculty are responsible for ensuring that all teachers in their department are setting appropriate homework regularly.
- Record and report on the non-completion of homework to parents/ carers.

Parents'/Carers' responsibilities

- The student would benefit from a suitable place at home where they can work or parents/carers could encourage them to make use of the school's facilities.
- Parents/carers could help by encouraging the student to meet homework deadlines.
- It would benefit the student if parents/carers could emphasise the value of homework and support the school by explaining how it can help them to progress.

- Students are encouraged by praise; it would be a benefit to the student if parents/carers gave praise when homework is completed.
- Parents/ carers should respond to reports of non-completion of homework by discussing this with their child and encouraging them to improve.
- The student would benefit from support, in the form of quick testing, with the 'Book of Knowledge' but parents/carers should acknowledge that their role may become less and less important as students become more responsible, independent and moves into GCSE territory. *Some suggested approaches are available from page 8 onwards.*

Here are some techniques and strategies that can be used **at home** to help you to help your child use the '**Book of Knowledge**' effectively.

The aim is to provide a range of practical ways that both you and your child can use to **learn, revise and retain** the subject knowledge in their independent study time, which they can **apply and build upon** in their lessons with their teacher and in their work. Most importantly, these subject-specific terms, methods and concepts provide the foundation for all of their learning in preparation for GCSE.

If you have any top tips that you would like to **share** with other parents and carers, please let us know.

Suggested approaches for individual definitions

1. Cover and recall

Read the terms alongside their definitions a number of times.

Cover the definitions and try to recall the exact words used to define the term.

This can be done verbally or as a written exercise.

This can be done independently by a student or it can be used by a partner (parent/carer/friend) to help quiz an individual student.

2. Flashcards

Produce flashcards for the terms you are learning. Write the term on one side and the definition on the other. Carry the cards around and try to recall the definition from the term on the front of the card. When this becomes easy, remove the cards from the pack and add others.

This can be done independently by a student or it can be used by a partner (parent/carer/friend) to help quiz an individual student.

3. Reduce and summarise

Try to write the definitions in your own way by reducing the formal definition to fewer words.

4. Picture / word association

Try to link terms and definitions using drawings. They do not necessarily need to be pictures that are directly related to the definitions, they just need to be pictures that link your memory to a definition. For example, write the word "ethereal" and draw a picture of an angel beside it. A small sketch like this can help you remember that "ethereal" describes a heavenly object.

5. Songs and poems

Try to link a number of different terms and definitions together by writing a song, poem or rap using the terms and definition.

6. Repetition

Write the list of words and corresponding definitions at least five times on a sheet of paper. Repetition improves memorization, so take the time to rewrite the words and definitions that give you the most trouble.

7. Increased usage

Try to introduce words into daily conversation. Provide definitions for those who are not familiar with the words. Not only will you share new words with others, but you will also reinforce the definitions in your own memory. If you can't find time for conversation, repeat the words and definitions aloud to yourself. Pretend to be a teacher and explain the definitions to an invisible audience in your own words.

8. Word of the day

Choose a different 'difficult' word every day and try to tell people the definition. This will have a similar impact as No.7.

9. Personification

If possible, try to link some words to people you know. They may be words that describe that person or they may simply remind you of them. For example, if you have a playful uncle, associate him with the word "jocular." If you have a stern teacher, associate her with the word "austere."

10. Internet search

Try to find as many definitions of words as you can; use an internet search of dictionaries.

11. Making equations

Take a definition and try to cut it into chunks. Make the chunks into an equation. This will help to see that long definitions are simply short phrases added together.

For example, the term 'Code of Conduct' has the following definition:

Written rules about a particular group of people and how we expect them to behave.

This could be written as:

Code of conduct = written rules + group of people + behaviour

It is simplified, it will help me remember it better and in time I will be able to recall the whole definition.

In the 'Book of Knowledge', the terms are grouped into topics. It is important that these terms can be linked together. There are many strategies that students can use and parents/carers can help with to make sure these terms are learned and linked.

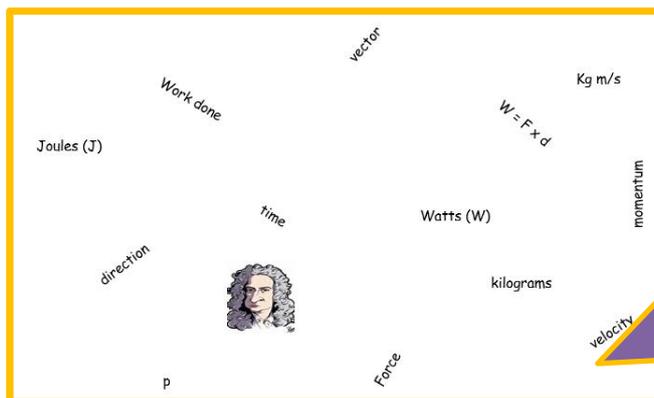
Suggested approaches for groups of definitions

12. Create a silly story

This goes a little bit further than similar techniques for remembering individual terms. Try to develop a silly story that uses a full set of terms and definitions that you choose from a topic.

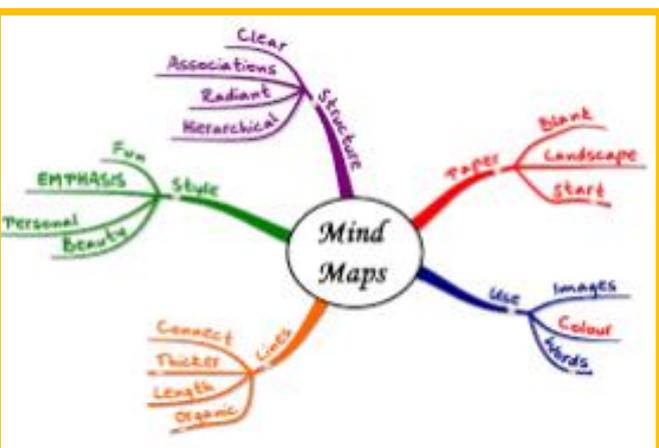
13. Produce connections map

Put a number of terms from the same topic on a grid and try to connect them together using the definitions. Write reasons for your links on the arrows you use to link terms. For example:



1. Start by writing down the different key words, terms, techniques, ideas from the subject area.
2. Use a ruler to draw a line to connect two words or ideas together.
3. Write on the line with an explanation of the connection.

14. Create a revision resource



You could use a large piece of paper to make a revision sheet for a specific topic or a mind map to help you links terms like the ones above.

15. Asking questions if students are stuck

Questions that you could ask to unlock thinking...

Explanation – Can you explain to me what you have learnt? Why might that be the case? How would we know that? Who might be responsible for...?

Hypothetical – What might happen if...? What would be the possible benefits/impact of X?

Evidence - How do you know that? What evidence is there to support this?

Clarification - Can you put that another way? Can you give me an example? Can you explain that term?

Linking and extending - Can you add to what you just said? How does this idea support/challenge what you explored in the lesson?

Summary and synthesis – What remains unknown at this point? What else do you need to know or do to understand this better?

Metacognition – What was the most challenging part? How will you use this knowledge in your next lesson? How could you approach this in a question?

The 'Book of Knowledge' also gives you the ability to learn how to spell terms. This can be an excellent way for parents/carers to get involved initially with helping students learn key terms for their homework.

16. Top tips for learning *spellings spellins spellings* ✓

- Group words with similar spelling patterns or sounds. E.g. Chair, hair, fair etc.
- Focus on the part of the word that is always wrong rather than the whole word.
- Competitions/games.
- Mnemonics - **big elephants can always use small elephants**
- Spot words within words - there's "a rat" in **separate**
- Know the pattern/rule - endings such as **-ed, -ing, -ly & -tion**
- Over pronounce silent letters or other parts - Feb-**ru**-ary, Wed-**nes**-day
- Chunk the word into small units - met-a-phor, de-ter-min-ed
- Look/say/cover/write/check
- You don't need to always write the words out - you can talk about spellings!
- Look for the root of the word e.g. **Knowledge** – **know**, **musician** – **music**.
- Use hands on (Kinaesthetic) approaches, e.g. sorting flashcards with the correct spellings and hiding them for them to find, etc.
- Use a spelling corner where you keep the correct spellings and encourage them to sound out the words on their way back from it (research suggests that it is whilst they are sounding the word out to themselves that the sounds register in the long term memory).

<p>Flashcards Needed: card cut up or record/ revision cards (if you hole-punch these in one corner you can thread a treasury tag through and make a handy booklet to take with you to school).</p> <p>On one side write a question or term, on the other the answer to the question or definition - use these to test yourself or others or to get someone to test you.</p>	<p>Flowers Needed: coloured card (circles or petal shapes), straws, sellotape, paper cups and some plasticine.</p> <p>Write the topic on the centre piece of card and stick petals around the edge of this. On each petal, write short notes/ definitions/ explanations on the topic, add a straw and stick these (you can make lots) into the cup using the plasticine. Great for creative types!</p>	<p>Washing Line Needed: card and string, pegs (mini ones are available).</p> <p>Cut out clothing shapes (shirts, pants, etc.). Write notes, definitions and explanations of key terms on each and peg them to your makeshift washing line (best keep this in your bedroom).</p>	<p>Inventing Questions Needed: nothing but pen and paper.</p> <p>Turn yourself into the examiner and for key topics come up with your own questions (that you think that the examiner might ask).</p> <p>THEN... answer them without your Book of Knowledge or exercise book.</p>
<p>Gamification Needed: paper, pens, buzzers... whatever you want! Create a revision game to play in class or with a group of revision pals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Challenge is a good one. Write lots of starters for ten and follow up questions for when that is answered correctly. • Football - this takes teams. Each team sits in rows and you start from the back. Get a question right and you've passed the ball to the player in front. Get it to the front and you score a goal. • Who wants to be a millionaire is an alternative. 	<p>Glossaries Needed: pens and paper, computer, textbooks.</p> <p>Create a list of key words/ characters and for each give a description/ explanation - great for short answer questions.</p>	<p>Previous Papers Needed: web access.</p> <p>Get yourself online and for each of the boards that you are on (AQA, Edexcel, etc.) there is a website. Go to this and you will find past papers which always have the mark schemes and examiners' reports with them.</p> <p>The best way to beat the stress of exam papers is to be familiar with them and looking at the mark scheme will ensure you understand what the examiner wants to see.</p> <p>What not write top tips to answer a particular question for a different year group?</p>	<p>Pairs Needed: card and pens.</p> <p>Create sets of card - example (one might have a question, the other the answer or one might have a key word and the other the definition).</p> <p>When you've created a whole set (say 20 cards) on a topic then turn them all blank side up on the floor and play the game - turn over one, then pick another - you are trying to get the card that matches your first.</p> <p>If you get a mismatch, turn them back over and it's the next person's turn... but remember where they are. The player with the most pairs wins!</p>



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