



BOU/SLT

8th September 2016



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Dear Parents and Carers

At The Polesworth School we set homework tasks for all our students. We do this because we believe that it can help students to achieve their potential more fully than if we simply relied on study conducted during the timetabled curriculum. There is clear evidence that successful students make progress when they embrace homework and where they take the opportunity to enjoy, consolidate and extend their learning. Through homework, students become flexible independent learners able to cope with the demands of a future working life.

1. **Independent Learning Projects**

In Years 7, 8 and 9, most homework is made up of a series of Independent Learning Projects – the ILPs. These are a series of structured tasks which are designed to encourage a degree of independence in the student. Students are expected to complete these tasks “under their own steam” and hand them in to their teachers at school.

* All the tasks are available on ‘FROG’ which is a secure platform for which all students have a unique login. This login and password are exactly the same as the one they will be given to access the school computers on site. To access this from home go onto the school website and click on the ‘FROG’ logo. Students will then be asked to login. Once on ‘FROG’ click on the ‘ILP’ tile. This will show them all the resources they need to complete their ILP and they simply click on the correct one that they need.
* Each ILP begins with a cover-page which gives brief details of what the project is about, what needs to be done, the hand-in date, etc.. It is hoped that the cover-page will make clear what your child needs to do. Do not hesitate to contact the relevant Head of Department if you have any questions relating to a particular project. Please contact your child’s Head of House if your child does not have access to a computer or the internet. Students are, of course, free to use computers and printers on the school site if they wish.
* Students will complete one of these on **one subject only per week.** In this way we aim to make homework clear for students and parents. In any given week it will be clear what subject your child should be studying at home. ILPs should be handed in in the first relevant lesson after the week in which the ILP is to be completed.
* The ILPs are of a set length. **A Year 7 student should spend 3 hours on ILP homework in a week; a Year 8 student should spend 4 hours; a Year 9 student should spend 5 hours.** Some students may choose to spend longer on a project and they may if they wish. However, this is not an expectation of the school. Students should aim to complete their projects within the specified time. One of the ways in which the projects encourage independence is by getting students to plan their work to fit the time available.
* No ILPs are set in the second half of Year 9. This is because GCSE work begins in this term. Here work appropriate to specific examination courses will be set.
* No ILPs are set for school holiday times.





Attached is a schedule of the ILPs for this year. This tells you which project your child will be working on in any given week. **The weeks indicated are the weeks in which the student will work on the project.** The project should be handed in during the relevant subject’s next lesson after the ILP week.

Also indicated on the schedule are the dates of the internal school examinations your son/daughter will be taking. These examinations are one of the ways in which subject departments in school assess the work that students are doing and the progress that students are making. They are also one of the ways in which we prepare our students for their external examinations (GCSE, BTEC, A Level, etc.) later in their school life. In a separate letter, I will provide more information about the school’s approach to the internal examinations.

1. **Mathematics and Modern Foreign Languages**

Mathematics, French and German do not appear in the ILP schedule. Students in Mathematics should expect to be set 60 minutes homework per fortnight in Year 7, 80 minutes homework per fortnight in Year 8 and 50 minutes homework per fortnight in Year 9. In French and German, students are frequently set short homework tasks of approximately 15 minutes. These are typically in order to consolidate classroom learning.

1. **Reading**

Reading at home has a central role in promoting students’ success. For this reason, students are expected to read to an adult for at least 15 minutes a night in Year 7 and in Year 8. This reading is monitored through a Reading Journal which is completed by the student and initialled by a parent/carer to be presented to the student’s English teacher.

1. **Tests and Revision**

Occasionally, revision for minor in-class tests (‘learning homework’) may be set as additional work.

We believe that our system of homework for Years 7, 8 and 9 has a number of strengths:

* Through it, students are encouraged to become more independent in their learning. Many ILPs require students to research information and to manage their time. These are valuable life skills and ones which are prominent in the school curriculum.
* The quality of students’ homework will be high. Over the last few years, work produced in ILPs has demonstrated a marked improvement on homework of previous years.
* ILPs are time-limited so as to avoid an overload of work on students.
* Students work on only one ILP in any given week so as to avoid confusion for them.
* School holidays are ILP free.
* Mathematics, reading in English and MFL are the only subjects to set regular homework in addition to ILPs.
* Occasionally students will be asked or advised to revise for tests. There are no ILPs in the two weeks before each main examination period.

Homework is a key part of the curriculum at our school. We believe that our homework system supports us in ensuring high standards for all of our students. Attached is a copy of this year’s ILP schedule.

Yours faithfully



Mr A Boulstridge

Deputy Headteacher