



The De Montfort School

UNLOCKING YOUR CHILD'S POTENTIAL

1 July 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Homework

You may be aware that there have been many studies done which look at the correlation between exam success and homework and it is well known that learning at home is an essential part of a good education. Research has shown that there are many benefits of regular homework. One hour a night of homework across the 6 years has been shown to equate to an extra year of schooling. Other benefits as noted by research are as follows:

- The increased progress from 12 months in a year to a possible 20 months
- The increased retention of knowledge
- Improved study habits and skills leading to an improved work ethic
- Improved self-direction and self-discipline
- Improved time management skills

With this in mind we are very keen to get this right for our students. Looking ahead to next academic year, we have created a new homework policy that details the type of tasks that students should be completing as well as the time allocation for students. As well as the obvious benefits of learning and consolidating what is taught in lessons, homework will be focussed upon helping your son/daughter to form good study habits in preparation for GCSE and A level.

Homework will be set according to a homework timetable that is designed to ensure students' work load is not excessive on any one night. As well as the obvious benefits of learning and consolidating what is taught in lessons, homework is focussed upon helping your son/daughter to form good study habits in preparation for GCSE and A level. As they progress through the school, their homework time allocation increases. For some students, homework will not pose any issues as all, however we recognise that for some it may be a struggle to begin with. With students in Years 10 and 11, we are very conscious that time is of the essence and homework is going to play a key role in the students' success. Although homework will be set from the first week, students will not be given homework sanctions until week 3, so that we can support them to settle back into school routines. We will write to you again in September to let you know your son/daughter's homework schedule and the types of tasks they will receive.

To further support your son/daughter, we will be looking to run a staffed homework club. It will be open to all and will provide students with a calm environment in which to complete their homework as well as allowing them access to books, computers and printers as necessary. Students who regularly miss homework deadlines may also be asked to attend homework club for a period of time in order to support them to improve their organisational skills and their homework habits.

The new homework policy has 2 key features:

- Literacy
Reading underpins everything that our students do in school. We believe that our students are entitled to become competent, resilient and fluent readers by: equipping them with a range of skills and strategies; promoting reading of challenging texts; and developing an appreciation of a wealth of literature to build upon their cultural capital. Evidence suggests that children who read every day not only perform better in tests than

those who don't, but also develop a broader vocabulary, increased general knowledge and a better understanding of other cultures. A recent Department for Education study showed that there "is a difference in reading performance equivalent to just over a year's schooling between young people who never read for enjoyment and those who read for up to 30 minutes per day". At The De Montfort School we recognise the importance of reading and expect that every student should be reading every day for a minimum of 30 minutes.

- Retrieval practice

Retrieval practice, also known as the testing effect or quizzing, is the process of getting students to retrieve the information that they have learnt. Quizzing is proven by research to have a significant impact on long term memory retention. Quizzing homework is designed to enable the students to develop the skills needed to be effective learners. It is a simple yet effective memory strategy that instructs students how to chunk, memorise and recall key elements of learning. It is essential that students master this skill as the new GCSE specifications requires an even stronger command of subject knowledge. Quizzing enables students to master information at home by ensuring that it is memorised over a longer period of time. It will hugely reduce the pressure of exams as the learning is spread over a number of years and it is a method commonly used by university students.

Please support us to ensure that your son/daughter is successful at school by supporting them with their homework. I have attached the proposed homework policy for you to read. If you would like further information relating to homework or any other issue, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Weston', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stuart Weston
Associate Headteacher