



Independent Learning Guidance for Parents

Department: Art

Year Group: 7-9

Date published: September 2012

Why is independent learning in art important?

Independent work in art can be valuable for several reasons; as a way of consolidating learning, extending understanding, skills or experiences, developing ideas, providing opportunities for independent learning or sometimes to develop individual interests and showcase talents. It can also be an opportunity to try something new or develop skills in areas that are not connected to the classwork projects. E.g 'Free' homeworks.

How will independent learning be set?

Independent work will be **set regularly as appropriate**. They may be **weekly tasks or sometimes extended tasks of 2-4 weeks** in which students are given an opportunity to develop their own ideas and work independently. Examples will be available on **Frontier** for parents to view and support their children at home. The lists of tasks made available may not be set in the order that they appear by each teacher but used as a general guide. In an effort to continually improve teaching and learning and aid pupil progress, art projects may evolve and sometimes new tasks may be added. It may not be appropriate to set independent work every week, so we hope that students will also take advantage of **extension activities**. If a pupil has a great idea or individual 'slant' on a task it may be possible to do this if they talk to their art teachers directly. Sometimes the independent learning activity might originate with the pupils themselves as we listen to their views and requests where we can!

What expectations do staff have of the work being completed?

The art department has **high expectations** of independent work from all pupils. If a weekly task, the minimum time expected to spend on it is **30 minutes**, however many students will often spend a lot longer than this. They are rewarded for effort with an **'E, G, S or U'** and **given both positive and constructive feedback that could be either verbal or written**. We expect maximum effort from the pupils and where their work has gone 'beyond our expectations' they could be rewarded with a **'wow factor star'**.

Much of the independent work (unless 3-D) will be completed in a **sketchbook** and pupils should take care with presentation and treat their sketchbook as a **'journal of their work'**. Sketchbooks should also be **brought to every lesson**.

What help and support is available?

Help and support are available from a variety of areas. **Junior art club** is on Tuesday lunchtime for pupils to complete homework or additional classwork. It is often possible to work in the art rooms at other lunchtimes if pupils ask their teachers. We are lucky to have a **specialist art teaching assistant** in the department who supports in many of the lessons but also in art club. **Fronter** can be accessed for more information on homework, extension tasks and also class powerpoints/slideshows. In addition, we have an **extensive art library and computers** within the art department for independent research. **The school library** also has a great selection of art books. Wherever possible, our aim is to **'help pupils to help themselves'** as self motivation and independent learning skills are so integral to Art later on at GCSE and A level.

What work can be completed in addition to the set tasks?

In addition to the set independent tasks, students who are really keen to progress can try some of the extension activities suggested on **Fronter**.

'Weekend' or 'holiday' projects can also be set according to the individual interests and skills of the pupils and if your child would like to do this, they need to discuss this with their teacher.

Sketchbooks are not just for work relating to classwork but for recording individual experiences, ideas and experiments and can be used for independent work or extension activities. Pupils should see them as a 'journal of their art work'.

Visiting galleries and exhibitions wherever possible can be a rewarding and enriching experience. (Hopefully with family or friends who can share the experience/discuss/help the pupil to consider their own response to the work they have seen).