



*'Once an Alder Granger, always an Alder Granger'*

# Alder Grange Homework and Personal Study Policy

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Last reviewed on:	18/10/25	
Next review due by:	18/07/26	

## PURPOSE

At Alder Grange School, we are highly ambitious for all our students. We believe that homework and independent study time, when used efficiently, supports our students to make the best possible progress during their time with us at Alder Grange and secure good outcomes that prepare them for success in the future. Our approach to homework and personal study is built on this foundation, ensuring it is a high-quality, purposeful tool that conveys high aspiration for their educational and personal achievement.

Within this framework, the specific purposes of any homework set are:

### 1. To Support and Deepen Learning:

- Provide opportunities to **consolidate and reinforce concepts** taught in the classroom, helping to transfer knowledge into long-term memory.
- Support pupils and students in the important process of '**knowledge acquisition**' through effective, evidence-based strategies such as retrieval and spaced practice.
- Provide a structured way for pupils and students to **act upon the high-quality feedback** they have received from teachers, thereby closing gaps in their understanding.

### 2. To Develop Independent and Resilient Learners:

- Cultivate essential life skills such as **discipline, responsibility, time management, and independent problem-solving** that will be valuable for higher education and future employment.
- Provide opportunities for pupils and students to take pride in their work and gain confidence from taking responsibility for their own learning, without this becoming a source of undue pressure or anxiety.

### 3. To Strengthen the Home-School Partnership:

- Indicate to pupils, students, and parents/carers the school's commitment to enhancing achievement, and to allow parents to **track what their children are learning**.
- Foster an "autonomy-supportive" environment where parents can guide rather than control their children's learning, thereby increasing engagement and skill development.
- Ensure that homework acts as a constructive bridge between home and school, rather than becoming a source of family tension, arguments, or stress.

## Quality and Purpose Over Quantity

*All homework will adhere to the principle of **quality over quantity**. Tasks will be meaningful and designed to support the curriculum schema, not assigned simply to fill time.*

- *Departments will plan a balanced diet of homework using the **Mode A (routine practice) and Mode B (open ended/creative tasks) framework**. Assignments will take various forms including reading, note making, project work, personal research, the critical viewing of drama productions, systematic learning and a wide range of other activities.*
- *Homework and independent study will never be set just for the sake of it.*
- *Curriculum Leaders will monitor the purposes and appropriateness of homework assignments set across their department.*

## Managing the Homework Load

*To protect student well-being and ensure homework remains effective, the homework load will be carefully managed. We will be guided by research which shows that homework benefits can plateau and become counterproductive when excessive.*

- *For Key Stages 3 and 4, total nightly homework should be manageable, aligning with the widely recognised '10-minute rule' as a general maximum to prevent overload. This equates to:*
  - i. *Year 7: 10 minutes homework per period taught*
  - ii. *Year 8 & 9: 15 minutes homework per period taught*
  - iii. *Year 10 & 11: 20 minutes homework per period taught*

- *For Key Stage 5, the focus shifts to developing independent study skills. The expectation is for a weekly volume of approximately 7-12 hours of productive, self-directed study, which research identifies as optimal for older students.*
- *To prevent severe anxiety caused by overlapping deadlines, Curriculum Leaders will coordinate the scheduling of major assignments.*

### **Effective Feedback and review**

***The effectiveness of any homework task is dependent on the quality of the feedback pupils receive.***

- *All homework assignments should be planned with the school's Feedback Policy in mind.*
- *Teachers should provide regular and timely feedback, which may take many forms including whole-class review, peer assessment, or self-correction, in addition to written marking where appropriate.*
- *Pupils must be given opportunities to act on this feedback to close the gap in their learning.*
- *Subject teachers will check, by means they decide to be most appropriate, that assignment grades are being properly recorded.*

*We do not expect pupils to undertake a routine of non-specific daily review on top of their assigned homework.*

### **Support and Access**

- Homework/Study Rooms.
  - For year 7 to 11 pupils the Library is open every lunchtime for all students.
  - The Homework Club in IT3 is open every lunchtime for all students.
  - For year 12 and 13 the Student Study Room is available.
  - AG+ services are available for SEND and any other pupils/students who may require some additional support, in the AG+2, 8:30am to 8:50am Monday to Friday and lunchtime, 1:00pm to 1:50pm.
- *If a pupil/student is absent from school, departments will work with these pupils to enable them to catch up on missing homework as well as classwork. Any work not completed in an appropriate manner will be dealt with by the relevant department in the first instance. On occasion the missing homework may need to be completed in an after school catch-up session.*
- *Class teachers should be aware that year 7 will need support getting used to homework systems, equally, Year 12 will need guidance in managing their transition to the independent study schedule of approximately 7-12 hours per week, as outlined in Guideline 3.*
- *If a pupil/student is consistently unable to complete homework, the department will investigate this in a supportive manner to identify and address any barriers to completion. The aim is to find a solution that enables the student to access the learning, utilising the in-school support systems available.*

### **Communication Regarding Homework**

It is the responsibility of subject teachers to set homework and independent study assignments and the responsibility of pupils/students to ensure they are fully aware of the work set.

- Homework and independent study assignments should be set on Google Classroom, as an assignment, so that pupils can easily check what has been set and when its completion is due.
- Where an assignment will run over several lessons or weeks this should be indicated on Google Classroom as an assignment with a due date.
- Any question raised about homework, should be referred to the appropriate Curriculum Leader.
- If communicating about a homework concern please see our communication policy.