

Dear parent carer

I am writing to you to gather feedback from you regarding the changes that we have made to how we set and monitor homework completion at Sheldon. Following from the survey that parent carers completed in October 2023, a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document addressing questions that were raised can be found on the school's website.

As previously communicated, research suggests that when completed, homework can improve the progress of a student by more than 5 months when compared to students who do not engage with homework<sup>1</sup>. Because of this fact, we have been working hard to ensure that how we set and monitor homework is robust across our curriculum offer.

## Consistency

We have implemented a homework timetable to set homework for Key Stages 3 and 4. In doing this, we believe that students, parent carers, and staff have clarity on when work should be set. Hopefully, this approach has provided our students sufficient time to manage their schoolwork alongside any other extracurricular or family commitments. The homework timetable can also be found below:

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Key Stage 3	Week 1	English Geography	ICT* PE**	Mathematics Languages	Science History	PSRE* Drama*
	Week 2	English Art	DT Music	Mathematics Languages	Science Dance*	
Key Stage 4	Weeks 1 and 2	English Option A	PE Option B	Mathematics Option C	Science Option D	PSRE*

\* Homework will be set less frequently for this subject

\*\* Homework will be set at the end of units of study for this subject

## Type of Homework

Drawing upon research and existing practice in high performing schools across the country, we recognise the importance of using retrieval practice to ensure that the powerful knowledge from within our curriculum is embedded in students' long-term memories. If students are unable to recall key facts, skills, and concepts, they are unable to apply that knowledge to their learning. Therefore, we have been working towards a model of setting multiple-choice quizzes for students to retrieve key information and ensure that it is not forgotten over time.<sup>2</sup> In most cases, the work has been set via a Microsoft Forms quiz. The benefit of using Microsoft Forms is that students receive immediate feedback on where they have been successful and areas that they will need to revisit. Using automated technology will also free up teachers' time so that they can focus on planning and preparing high-quality lessons<sup>3</sup> that explicitly address students' gaps in knowledge during Do Now activities. Lessons will also draw upon the powerful

<sup>1</sup> [Education Endowment Foundation \(2021a\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Education Endowment Foundation \(2021b\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Department for Education \(2023\)](#)

knowledge and will have more capacity for an explicit focus on higher level thinking skills, such as analysis, application, and evaluation.

Following discussions with Faculty Heads, we have made some adaptations to this approach to ensure the best provision for your child. For example, there will be instances where homework might be set using other platforms that are more appropriate for knowledge recall (e.g., Sparxmaths, Memrise for MFL, and Kerboodle in science). For more creative and practical subjects (e.g., PE/Drama/Art), quizzes may be set less frequently to allow students to explore the subject more creatively. Finally, teachers may set fewer quizzing questions to allow time for students to complete coursework, develop examination skills/techniques, or revise for upcoming assessments.

The homework set should mean that students in Key Stage 3 should be spending approximately 20 minutes on each homework task, and students in Key Stage 4 should be spending approximately 30 minutes on each task.

### **Monitoring Homework**

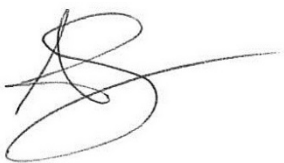
We have purchased a homework add-on for our ePraise platform and from November, all homework should be diarised using this software. This means that parent carers can use ePraise to see the homework that has been set for their children, when it is due, and whether it has been completed. You should already be familiar with ePraise as we use the platform to record merits and demerits. If you require any support to access ePraise, a link to the parent guide can be found [here](#).

Using ePraise has ensured that senior and middle leaders can support teaching staff and more effectively quality assure the standards and frequency of homework that is being set for our students.

### **Feedback**

We would value your feedback on the impact of the changes that have been made to how we set homework at Sheldon. We know that any change to practice is a process and will be refined over time. Your feedback, along with the feedback from staff and students will be essential in ensuring that we are doing the best for the community we serve. Regardless of whether you are happy or unhappy with the changes, we are keen to hear from you. You can access the feedback form by clicking on this [link](#). This form will close at 08:00 on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Kind regards



Andy Symes

Deputy Headteacher – Pedagogy and Professional Development