

9 February 2023

Dear families

I am excited to be writing to you regarding homework for our Year 8 students this year. Homework is a key part of the expectations at our academies because the evidence is clear: regular, effective homework leads to better outcomes for young people. Research has demonstrated that students who complete regular homework make, on average, 5 months' more progress than those who do not. This can make all the difference to our students' learning and is a vital part of helping every student leave Dixons Fazakerley Academy with the option to pursue university or a meaningful, real alternative.

What will homework look like at Dixons Fazakerley?

All of our homework will be run through the 'Carousel Learning' website, except for Maths which will be run through an online programme called 'Sparx'. Each week, our Academy website will be updated with the relevant links to each Carousel Learning homework and students will be expected to click on those links, enter their full first name and surname and then complete two activities. The first activity is to revise the core knowledge from the topic students are studying by using the online flashcards. Once students are confident they remember this knowledge, they will complete a multiple choice quiz to check their understanding. Students can complete the quiz up to five times; we expect students to achieve an 80% pass mark for each quiz on Carousel. The quiz is self-marking, so feedback is immediate for students. Homework for each subject on Carousel will take no longer than 30 minutes to complete.

Sparx, the platform we use for Maths, is an intuitive programme that uses algorithms to set homework that is tailored to the current knowledge and performance of each individual student. Therefore, the homework will be just challenging enough to help each student get a little bit better without it being so difficult that they cannot complete the Maths questions. The students will be directed to their Sparx homework each week by their Maths teachers, and you will also receive an automatic email reminder of the Maths homework. The Maths homework on Sparx will take 1 hour to complete but students have longer to complete this compared to the shorter homework in other subjects. If you would like more information on Sparx, please visit the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQfZhTosOfg>

What do students need to do and what support is in place?

Homework for Year 8 will start from Monday 20 February 2023. Students will be shown how to log in to Carousel and Sparx before their first homework has been set and will be reminded in Morning Meeting of the expectations. For students who are unable to access the homework online at home, we have opened up Room 68 (upstairs by our pastoral base) as a silent homework space for 1 hour immediately after school each day.

Homework is a vital part of every student's education, so we expect deadlines to be met and will be tracking completion of homework as part of our usual routines. Students who do not complete their homework will receive a 30 minute correction. However, as students are getting used to the new systems on Carousel and Sparx, the first two weeks of homework will be treated as 'practice' weeks: students are expected to complete their homework, but we will support with any issues/difficulties and not issue corrections during these two weeks. This will be communicated clearly to students and we will be very clear about when corrections will begin to take effect.

If you have any question or concerns regarding homework, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Kingstone
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Dixons Fazakerley Academy

