



St Mary's School
CAMBRIDGE

**Independent
Learning Policy**

2016-2017

Ethos

This policy contributes to living out the Mary Ward characteristic, 'working hard and achieving excellence'.

Rationale

The purpose of promoting independent learning is to further develop the motivation and enthusiasm of all pupils from the Early Years children to the Sixth Form, including our Boarders to learn. It is intended that each pupil will take some responsibility for her own learning. Each pupil is expected to have a clear knowledge of her current level of attainment and clear targets for future knowledge, skills and understanding. Such discussion between teacher and pupil gives an added focus for learning, and is designed to provide an individual step by step guide suited to the pupil's needs.

Aims

We aim to develop an awareness in each pupil of how, why and what she is learning. At St Mary's we promote independence in each pupil to identify her own best methods through her individual targets. Our aim is to continue to develop successful and motivated independent learners and to

- personalise all learning
- pace learning to the needs of each pupil
- sustain the pupil's interest in learning
- increase self-confidence and self-esteem
- develop the pupil's interest in all subjects
- give each pupil a sense of constant achievement

Procedure

Within each subject each pupil understands her own learning status and has a clear view of the steps she needs to take for further improvement.

Differentiation within the subject ensures that when the goal is achieved, the pupil is given opportunity to continue to move forward.

A target which proves too easy or too difficult will be modified quickly through discussion with the pupil.

The teacher continues to monitor and assess each step before the pupil begins to work towards the next key learning point, and each point is considered to be achieved when ongoing practice demonstrates secure understanding.

Pupils are encouraged to discuss their goals with their parents.

Each piece of work and the marking thereof reflects the pupil's current level of learning.

The teacher and the pupil evaluate the success of each learning objective to inform the next stage of learning.

Each pupil is encouraged to further explore any area of learning in which she shows a particular interest or talent by carrying out research using the library and given websites.

Pupils are encouraged to continue researching outside school hours.

Opportunities are created for the pupil to present her independent learning to her peer group.

Challenging independent work and achievement of personal targets are rewarded using the school's House system.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to make available resources which could be of interest to a student with a particular proclivity in a given area. Such resources might be accessible to the student in the Library, on SMO, in the student area of the work directory or in the designated teaching room. It is the responsibility of the subject teacher to bring such resources to the attention of the students, especially to students who have demonstrated an interest or ability in this area.

Review of Policy

The Head of Juniors and the SS Deputy Head (Academic) are responsible for this Policy. This Policy is reviewed annually by the Governors and will be next reviewed in May 2017.