

September 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

Independent Learning Unit (ILU) Homework

Throughout this year, in addition to regular homework, students in Years 7 and 8 will receive a number of **Independent Learning Units (ILUs)** from a wide range of subjects. ILUs are primarily research based projects and in many cases they will involve an element of choice. They are designed to:

- Develop independent learning and time management skills
- Promote a greater depth of understanding of key subject areas
- Encourage a 'love of learning' by allowing pupils to personalise their learning more
- Enhance skills that pupils require for KS4 courses and life beyond Higham Lane School

In brief, the ILUs consist of:

- Completing one ILU per subject over the academic year
- Completing a maximum of two ILUs at any one time
- No ILUs spanning the Christmas and Easter holiday periods
- A rationale of the content and its links to the Curriculum
- Documentation and support materials available in a number of electronic formats to support access from home using different software packages

ILUs will last approximately 3-4 weeks and students will be expected to spend approximately 3-4 hours on each ILU during this period. The ILU start dates and deadlines will be spread out over the year and all tasks will be introduced to students in a lesson during the week of the start date. All ILU instruction sheets and supporting resources will be accessible via Sharepoint and a timetable of the start dates and deadlines (week commencing) is attached for the whole academic year for parents and carers to support students with the effective management of their time and homework. A copy of this timetable is also available on Sharepoint.

The marking of ILUs will differ from that of traditional assessment marking and/or classwork. Students will not be awarded grades for ILUs. Instead, developmental statements that feedback on skills, knowledge and understanding will be offered by teachers and on occasions, fellow students, within 3 weeks of each deadline. In some subjects, parents/carers may be encouraged to provide feedback too. Our main aim is to focus on the learning and the learning processes, developing a growth mindset in students where the focus is on reflection and continual improvement, as opposed to a judgemental approach to marking.

If you have any further questions, then please do not hesitate to contact us at school. Thank you for your anticipated support.

Yours sincerely

K Robinson
Assistant Headteacher
Teaching and Learning

