

## **Sparx FAQs**

Initial parental letter can be found [here](#).

### **What is Sparx?**

Sparx is an online Maths programme we will be using to set homework for one hour each week. It sets work based on our curriculum, 60% of the questions set will be based on current material and 40% will be revising past topics. All homework is tailored to the individual student, Sparx monitors students' performance and adapts the work set based on what the student needs.

More information about Sparx can be found in this [2-minute video](#).

### **How do the students login to Sparx?**

Sparx is accessible through any device with a browser so there is no need to download any apps or worry about compatibility. To access the homework students should visit the Sparx website [here](#), select St Aidan's Church of England High School Harrogate and click the option to "log in to Sparx using Microsoft" they will then be prompted to enter their school user name and password.

### **When is the homework set and due?**

The Maths department will be setting Sparx homework every Wednesday afternoon and it will be due for the following Wednesday regardless of whether a Maths lesson takes place that day. There may be times where individual class teachers decide to pause homework on Sparx so the class can concentrate on another homework such as revision.

### **What support is available for my child in school?**

There will be Maths teachers and sixth form students available to support with Sparx homework on a Wednesday lunchtime in IT3 and IT4. There are also videos on Sparx to support the students with all of the questions.

### **How can I support my child at home?**

As with any homework it is beneficial if parents/carers check their student's progress through the tasks, from September Sparx will send progress emails to help you to know how your child is progressing through the homework each week. However, it is important that the work completed is the student's own otherwise Sparx could misunderstand the student's ability level and make the work too difficult. In general, we would recommend the students have a go at the question and watch the videos when they get stuck before seeking help.

### **Why are the Maths department using Sparx?**

Several pieces of research published in the last year suggest that while Maths is beneficial if it is set at the correct level on balance it can be detrimental to student progress because it is either too hard or too easy, a summary of the research can be found [here](#). Sparx adapts to the ability level of the student to ensure the homework is pitched correctly to maximise each student's progress.

We are determined to achieve the best outcomes possible for our students and believe that Sparx will help improve our students' grades at GCSE. This is supported by research from Cambridge University and the Rand institute (found [here](#)) that suggests regular use of Sparx led to improved Maths outcomes.

### **What is a bookwork check?**

Research suggests that writing work down aids retention in Maths so students are required to write down their answers in the back of their Maths exercise book. Sparx then periodically checks students are doing this by asking for answers they got correct in the past hour. If students are able to answer the bookwork checks correctly they will decrease in frequency, whereas if students fail to answer the bookwork check they will receive them more often. More information about bookwork checks can be found [here](#).

### **The homework is taking more than an hour, is something wrong?**

The odd long homework is nothing to worry about and future homework lengths will adapt, but if you notice that your child is regularly spending longer than 60 minutes on their homework, we would recommend you check your child is writing their answers in their book (to avoid increasing the number of bookwork checks that can slow down the homework) and is not distracted by anything else while doing their work.

### **What data does Sparx use?**

From September Sparx will use parental/carer contact details to keep parents/carers informed of the students' progress through the weekly homework.

Sparx uses the students school login details and email addresses to log in to the Sparx website. Sparx keeps data on setting, age, ability and pupil premium status to help ensure homework is set at an appropriate level and feed into school reporting and monitoring systems. Other users will not be able to view/access this information.

More information on how Sparx use your data can be found [here](#).