



Ark Boulton
Academy



Customer Story | Assignment Analytics | Secondary Academy

Improving Homework Engagement with Assignment Analytics and Microsoft Teams

A Case Study with Ark Boulton Academy



CloudDesignBox



SharePoint



Teams



Microsoft 365



Implementation Snapshot

A shift from fragmented homework systems to a single, visible and measurable approach across the academy.

Core Solutions Implemented

- Microsoft Teams Assignments standardised across all subjects
- Cloud Design Box Assignment Analytics dashboard
- Centralised homework tracking across subjects and teachers
- Student-level cross-subject homework visibility
- Subject and teacher performance insights for middle leaders
- Reduction of manual tracking across third-party platforms

Key Outcomes

Homework engagement transformed

- Homework assignments doubled within one term
- Subjects consistently setting homework increased from 3 to 15

Whole-school visibility established

- Leaders can view homework activity across all subjects for an individual student
- Middle leaders can identify patterns and support staff more effectively

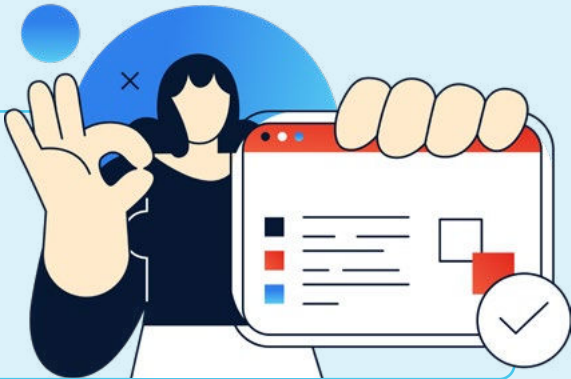
Operational efficiency improved

- Manual reporting and spreadsheet tracking significantly reduced

Homework visibility and engagement transformed within one term

2x

increase in homework assignments set



5x

increase in subjects consistently setting homework

100%

cross-subject visibility for every student



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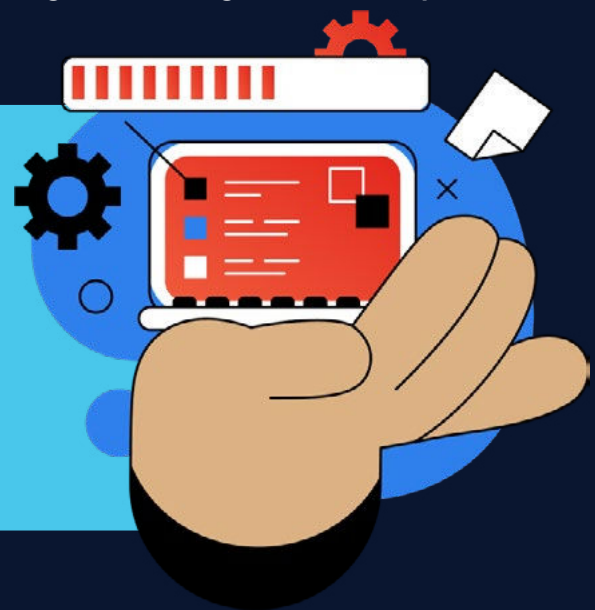
Introduction

Ensuring homework is set consistently across a secondary school can be difficult. Departments may rely on different platforms, expectations can vary between teachers, and leaders often lack a clear way to see what is happening across the school as a whole.



Ark Boulton Academy addressed this challenge by bringing homework into Microsoft Teams and introducing Cloud Design Box Assignment Analytics.

This shift has brought consistency for staff, clarity for students and actionable insight for leaders responsible for monitoring engagement beyond the classroom.

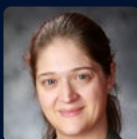


A School Serving a Highly Diverse Community

Ark Boulton Academy is part of the Ark Schools network and serves a community facing significant socio-economic challenges.

As Rosalyn Chalk, Assistant Principal at the academy, explains:

“Our school is predominantly within a very deprived catchment area, so we have 75% of our students who are pupil premium. We are the second highest school for pupil premium in the country currently, so we have quite a challenging demographic.”



Rosalyn Chalk
Assistant Principal
Ark Boulton Academy


Despite these circumstances, the school maintains a strong commitment to ensuring that every student has access to the opportunities and support needed to succeed.

“We try and make sure that our students have got every opportunity and we make sure that they are able to progress.”


Technology already plays an important role in enabling that ambition. Students are issued with one-to-one Chromebook devices and use Microsoft 365 as part of their everyday learning environment.

Homework is recorded through Microsoft Teams so that both students and parents can easily see what work has been set.

As Rosalyn notes:



“By logging all of our homework on Teams, it means that parents are able to access that through our parent app.”



While this approach helped provide structure, leaders still needed a clearer way to understand how homework was being used across the school.



When Homework Activity Is Difficult to See

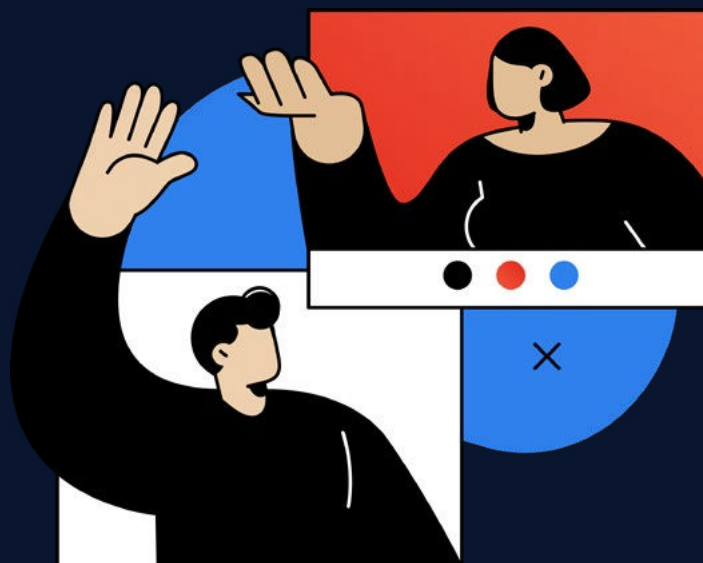
Before introducing analytics, the academy faced a familiar challenge: while homework was being set and completed, gaining a clear view of activity across the whole school required significant effort.

Different departments relied on a mixture of digital platforms alongside Microsoft tools. Each system worked well within its own context, but together they created a fragmented picture of homework activity.

Rosalyn recalls the manual work often involved in trying to understand what students had been set.

“We were having to check students’ work lesson by lesson. We use a lot of online platforms, so things like Seneca and Sparx, and we were having to go into those platforms manually and check it.”

This made it difficult for middle leaders to maintain oversight across departments.

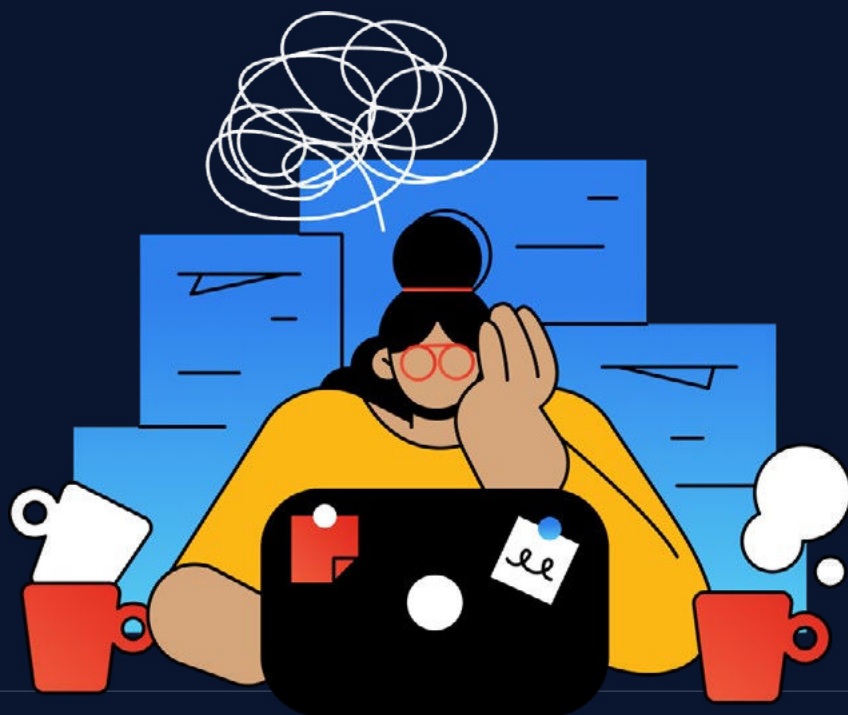


“It was very difficult for our middle leaders, our heads of department and our directors to be able to hold their teams to account.”

For students, inconsistency between platforms could also lead to confusion.

“Some departments were setting on Teams and had done from the start. Some departments were just setting on platforms. Students could say ‘I didn’t know it had been set’”

Without a central view of homework activity, identifying patterns in engagement or supporting students who were struggling was far more difficult than it needed to be.



Standardising Homework Through Microsoft Teams

To create greater consistency, Ark Boulton Academy made a deliberate decision to standardise homework through Microsoft Teams assignments.

This established a single location where students could clearly see what work had been set and when it was due. At the same time, the school wanted leaders to gain a clearer understanding of how homework was being used across subjects.

To support that oversight, the academy introduced Cloud Design Box Assignment Analytics. The platform aggregates homework activity across teachers, subjects and year groups into a single dashboard.

For Rosalyn, the impact was immediate.

“We’ve been able to track homework much more successfully. We can see on a subject-by-subject and teacher-by-teacher basis.”

This visibility has enabled middle leaders to support their departments more effectively.

“Our heads of department have been able to identify staff who may need a little bit more support and help them with the process.”

Perhaps most importantly, the analytics allows leaders to see patterns in student engagement that would otherwise remain hidden.

“This analytics actually allows me to look at one student across all of their subjects. I can see if they’re struggling with homework in maths or science, or if they’re struggling across the board.”

This insight makes it easier to determine whether challenges are subject-specific or whether wider pastoral support may be required.



Turning Data Into Leadership Insight

With homework now visible through a single system, leaders began to see patterns that had previously been difficult to identify. One of the most noticeable changes was the increase in assignments being set through Microsoft Teams.

Rosalyn describes how the shift became clear within a single academic year.

“If we compare the data from autumn term to spring term, we’ve doubled the number of active assignments that have been set.”

At the same time, adoption spread across departments.

“In autumn we had three subjects regularly setting on Teams. We’ve now moved to fifteen subjects actively setting work.”

Students now have a clearer understanding of expectations and deadlines.

“Students know exactly what they need to do and when they need to do it.”

For school leaders, the ability to see homework activity across the academy has become an important tool for monitoring engagement and supporting both staff and students.

Seeing the Whole Picture of Student Engagement

Perhaps the most significant change has been the ability to view homework activity holistically.

Rather than examining individual lessons or platforms, leaders can now look across all subjects for a single student and identify emerging patterns.

“Assignment Analytics allows me to look at one student across all of their subjects. Then we can determine what intervention we put in place.”

This perspective enables earlier and more targeted intervention. If a pupil is struggling across several subjects, support can be coordinated quickly. If difficulties appear within one specific department, subject leaders can respond appropriately.

Alongside these insights, the platform has also reduced the amount of manual reporting previously required to understand homework activity across the school.

“We’re not collating information from multiple sources and we’re not filling in spreadsheets.”

Instead of gathering information from multiple systems, leaders now have a clear and immediate view of homework activity across the academy.

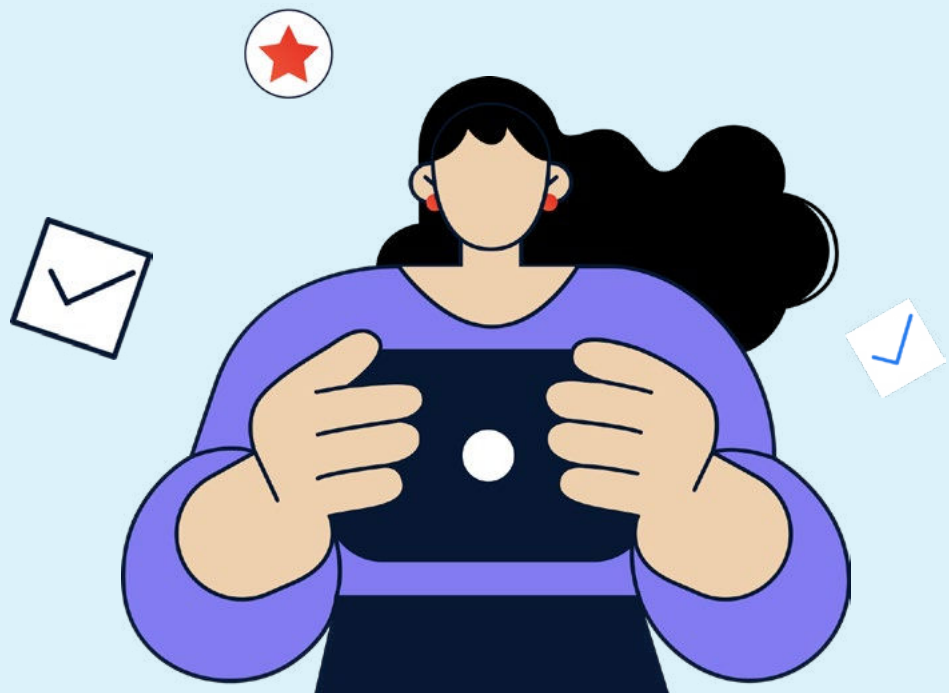
Rosalyn reflects that the greatest benefit lies in the clarity the system provides.

“From a leadership point of view, it means I can see much more holistically. I’ve got that opportunity to look at the wider picture.”

The platform has therefore helped transform homework from a series of individual departmental activities into a visible and measurable part of the school’s wider learning strategy.

As Rosalyn summarises:

“It just makes my job easier.”





Assignment Analytics allows me to look at one student across all of their subjects. Then we can determine what intervention we put in place.

Rosalyn Chalk
Assistant Principal
Ark Boulton Academy

About Cloud Design Box

Cloud Design Box enhances Microsoft 365 with a structured intranet platform and purpose-built SharePoint components that help organisations build clear, scalable digital architecture.

VISIT
clouddesignbox.co.uk

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