

POLICY: St Joseph's School Homework Policy and Guidelines



1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe St Joseph's School approach to homework. St Joseph's beliefs about homework considers the needs and developmental phase of students as well as considering the circumstances of twenty-first century families.

At St Joseph's we acknowledge that the time children spend with their families and their involvement in out of school activities, are important components in the development of the whole child. In determining homework, it is important to consider that students may be engaging in other activities outside of school and are limited with time.

2. RATIONALE

Research by Hattie (2009) argues that homework is more effective for secondary schooling, than it is for primary school students. Further, short and frequent homework is more effective than lengthy homework (Hattie, 2008). The effectiveness of homework is increased when the teacher monitors it and gives the student feedback (Hattie, 2009).

Homework can be effective in supporting learning if it:

- Is short, frequent and monitored by the teacher
- Is appropriate and adapted to particular years of schooling in line with the relevant curriculum
- Is clearly related to class work (and therefore the curriculum) and feedback is provided by the teacher
- Is varied and differentiated to individual learning needs and reflects the diverse needs of students
- Consolidates, revises and/or applies students' classroom learning
- Assists students to prepare for upcoming classroom learning such as formulating ideas, collecting relevant materials or completing surveys or questionnaires
- Refrains from requiring dependence on unreasonable levels of parental assistance or resources that are not readily available to the student (eg. When assigning homework which may have a computer component, where appropriate a suitable alternative should be made available)
- Allows time for family, recreational, community and cultural activities
- Is balanced across learning areas to avoid stress and overload
- Homework should be a positive experience for students, parents and teachers
- Homework should allow parents to engage in the learning process with their child in order to demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.

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3. POLICY STATEMENT

At St. Josephs' we recognise that children need life/social skills as well as academic skills to prepare them for their future life, beyond school and home. Therefore, each week or fortnight, class teachers P-6 devise a 'Homework Grid' that incorporates a diverse range of activities.

The Homework Grid philosophy encourages positive family interactions and includes physical activity, allows for self-directed learning and recognises the wide range of after school activities that students take part in. It gradually increases in time and complexity from Prep to Year 6.

4. PRINCIPLES

The use of the Homework Grid ultimately allows for parents and teachers to work together for the benefit of all children. Activities should emphasise diversity, family life and active pursuits. It encourages a student to become an independent self-starter who is responsible, persevering, self-regulating, self-evaluating and self-correcting. The Homework Grid acknowledges that students need to be lifelong learners who are flexible and able to adapt to change.

Children need life skills as well as academic skills to cope with life beyond school and home. Parents and teachers work together for the benefit of all children. (Ian Lillico, 2004)

Description:

The Homework Grid includes:

- Activities to practise concepts learnt at school.
- Work done at home for home- eg shopping and housework.
- Physical activity.
- Activities that enhance family life eg being read to, playing games as a family, cultural activities etc

Literacy skills every day Read a variety of books including school home readers	Literacy skills every day Practice high frequency words	Life skills Shopping with parents
Physical activity Sport/training/outdoor fun	Housework Compulsory every afternoon/evening	Drill and Practice Eg. Times tables, number facts, Word families.

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Teach your parents something you were taught at school that day/week	Play a game with an adult/ family member	Assignments/ Project research (if applicable to current classroom learning)
Meditation/ Spiritual / Relaxation/TRP App	Technology Use technology for schoolwork if necessary	Other

Development of this approach to homework considers information and comment gathered from parents, staff and students as well as research and guidelines regarding homework from across Australia.

Homework should focus on positive, productive and supported learning which is aligned to the Australian Curriculum.

Homework will relate directly to the learning and teaching programs appropriate to the needs of students. As such, any tasks set will reflect the current work of the students and relate to the short and timely planning cycles for students using a differentiated approach. Homework will be in grid form, adjusted to suit the year level of the student. Teachers are responsible for setting, marking and providing feedback to students related to homework.

Appropriate supports are to be put in place for the successful completion of homework. (eg. Extra support for students struggling to complete homework) Homework should take into account outside school hours activities, recreation and family time, community and cultural activities.

We believe that homework is a partnership between school and home, with the teacher, parent/s and child each having responsibilities.

The teacher's role is to:

- Communicate expectations clearly to students and parents
- Provide meaningful feedback to students
- Set reasonable and relevant homework
- Set a flexible time frame
- Maintain open communication with parents and students

The parent's role is to:

- Provide an environment for the child where supervision, encouragement and help are provided
- Respect the child's knowledge and skills

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- Communicate with the teacher and sign homework, if requested

The student's role is to:

- Be responsible for the completion of their homework to an acceptable standard
- Seek help from the teacher or family when needed.

Homework recommended guidelines to include in Homework Grid:

- Prep: 10 minutes daily (4 nights per week)
 - Practising literacy skills eg. Chatting Children program and High frequency word recognition and Home readers
 - Reading may include: reading to, reading with; and by parent, carer/older siblings
- Year 1-2: 15 minutes maximum daily (4 nights per week)
 - Practising literacy skills eg. Reading, High Frequency words and spelling
 - Reading may include: reading to, reading with; and by parent, carer/older siblings
 - Drill and Practice of previously introduced skills
- Year 3-4: 20 minutes maximum (4 nights per week)
 - Practising literacy skills eg. Reading, High Frequency words and spelling
 - Reading may include: reading to, reading with; and by parent, carer/older siblings
 - Drill and Practice of previously introduced skills
- Year 5-6: 30 minutes maximum (4 nights per week)
 - Practising literacy skills eg. Independent reading and spelling
 - Drill and Practice of previously introduced skills
 - Preparation for and completion of class work as required.

5. REFERENCES

Hattie, J. 2008, Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement, Routledge, New York.

Hattie, J. 2012, Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximising impact on Learning, Routledge, New York.

Lillico, I. 2004, Homework and the Homework Grid, Tranton Enterprises.