

HOMEWORK

Rationale

- As part of a comprehensive and balanced curriculum within Victorian schools, homework is seen as one way of supporting and fostering life-long learning and connecting families with the learning of their children.
- DET guidelines provide information about fostering good life-long learning and study habits, the importance of administering level-appropriate homework to students, and the different types of homework that may be undertaken in schools
- Schools must have a documented approach to homework which takes into account the personal and developmental needs of students.
- The setting of homework needs to take into consideration the need for students to have a balanced lifestyle. This includes sufficient time for family, sport and recreation, cultural pursuits and employment where appropriate.
- Implementation of good homework policy:
 - Involves communication between teachers; between teachers and students and parents/carers
 - relates homework activity to what is taught in the classroom
 - sets up an element of challenge in the homework to be set
 - is based on individualised homework activities/plans, aligned with individualised learning styles and abilities
 - links homework activities with prompt, appropriate assessment and feedback.
- The school homework approach should be informed by a shared understanding and be regularly monitored through feedback from teachers, students, parents/carers and the School Council as appropriate.
- It is not necessary to assign large amounts of homework; however it is important that homework provides students with opportunities to practice skills, review content and deepen understanding of concepts learned. Homework and practice can also help students to develop self-regulation processes, such as time management and study skills.

Value of Homework

The current evidence and research shows that the quality of homework assigned is likely to be more important than the quantity. Research has established that homework has a positive effect on learning, particularly at the middle and secondary school levels (Xu, 2010; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2005). Although homework's effectiveness has been challenged by educators, parents, and students (Kohn, 2006), it continues to be an important educational supplement used by most teachers to enhance the learning experience of their students (Patall, Cooper, & Wynn, 2010). Overall, the effectiveness of homework is enhanced by providing students with choices among homework tasks, which will result in higher motivational and performance outcomes, students' autonomy, and intrinsic motivation (Patall et al., 2010).

Homework helps students by:

- complementing and reinforcing classroom learning
- fostering good lifelong learning and study habits
- providing an opportunity for students to become responsible for their own learning
- developing self-regulation processes such as goal-setting, self-efficacy, self-reflection and time management
- supporting partnerships with parents by connecting families with the learning of their children
- **Schools** can support students by:
 - fostering lifelong learning and connecting families with the learning of their children, as part of a comprehensive and balanced curriculum within Victorian schools
 - ensuring the school's homework policy is relevant to the needs of students
 - advising parents/carers of homework expectations at the beginning of the school year and provide them with a copy of the homework policy
 - encouraging parents/carers of early primary school aged children to read to and with their children for enjoyment
 - ensuring that upper primary and secondary school students use homework diaries to provide a regular communication between parents and the school. Diaries may be electronic.
- **Teachers** can support students by:
 - equipping students with the skills to solve problems
 - encouraging real-life problem solving, logical thinking, creativity and imagination
 - setting varied, challenging and meaningful tasks related to class work to suit the students' learning needs
 - giving students enough time to complete homework, considering home obligations and extracurricular activities
 - assessing homework and providing timely and practical feedback and support
 - helping students develop organisational and time-management skills
 - ensuring parents/carers are aware of the school's homework policy
 - developing strategies within the school to support parents/carers becoming active partners in homework.
 - offering a wide range of opportunities for families to engage in their children's learning.
- **Parents** can support students by:
 - developing a positive and productive approach to homework

- ensuring there is a balance between the time spent on homework and recreational activities
- reading to them, talking with them and involving them in learning opportunities during everyday household routines and physical activity
- talking to teachers about any concerns they have about the homework
- attending the school events, productions or displays their child is involved in
- ensuring upper primary and secondary students keep a homework diary
- discussing homework with their child in their first language, if English is not the main language spoken at home, and linking it to previous experiences
- linking homework and other learning activities to the families' culture, history and language, linking with relevant services, clubs, associations and community groups.
- **Students** can take responsibility for their own learning by:
 - being aware of the school's homework policy
 - discussing with their parents or caregivers homework expectations
 - accepting responsibility for the completion of homework tasks within set time frames
 - following up on comments made by teachers
 - seeking assistance when difficulties arise
 - organising their time to manage home obligations, participation in physical activity and sports, recreational and cultural activities and part-time employment.

Purpose

- To ensure the school develops a homework policy in consultation with their school community (including the Principal, teachers, School Council, parents/carers and students) and that the policy is communicated to all parents.
- To ensure the school sets homework that supports educational requirements.
- To ensure that Newport Gardens Primary School complies with DET policy and guidelines.

Implementation

- The School Council will develop and publish a homework policy.
- All families will be advised of our homework expectations at the beginning of the year.
- The school will provide parents with a copy of the school's homework policy.
- The school will follow up with parents if a student regularly fails to complete homework.
- The school will work with parents/guardians to establish good homework patterns from Foundation (Prep).
- Homework will be assigned within the following general framework as it applies to a primary school.

Homework should be:

- appropriate to the student's skill level and age
- purposeful, meaningful and relevant to the curriculum
- interesting, challenging and when appropriate open ended
- assessed by teachers with feedback and support provided
- balanced with a range of recreational, family and cultural activities

Homework should provide opportunities for students to apply new knowledge or to review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, such as:

- reading for pleasure
- practising spelling words
- practising physical education skills
- writing essays and other creative tasks
- practising and playing musical instruments
- completing consolidation exercises for Mathematics
- practising words/phrases learnt in a Language Other Than English.

Homework should encourage students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively, such as:

- writing a book review
- researching local news
- finding material on the Internet
- making or designing an art work
- monitoring advertising in a newspaper
- completing Science investigation exercises

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or if guidelines change (latest update mid-March 2016).

This update was ratified by School Council on August 16th 2016

Reference:

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/curriculum/pages/homework.aspx

