



Information for Parents and Caregivers

The Homework Policy

The NSW Department of Education and Training has released its Homework Policy for implementation in all government schools.

In consultation with their parent and community bodies, schools will build on the contents of the new policy to revise their own homework policies. This will ensure they are relevant to the needs of their students.

School-based homework policies will be distributed to staff, students, parents and caregivers.

While homework is an important component of the teaching and learning process, schools recognise that it is important for students to have time for play, leisure and physical activities outside of school.

The benefits of homework

Homework is valuable because it:

- strengthens home-school links
- allows for practising, extending and consolidating work done in class
- teaches students how to plan and organise their time
- develops students' research skills
- establishes habits of study, concentration and self-discipline which will serve students for the rest of their lives
- reaffirms the role of parents and caregivers as partners in education
- provides parents and caregivers with insights into what is being taught in the classroom and the progress of their children
- challenges and extends gifted and talented children.

You can expect homework to:

- be appropriate for each student's age and ability
- take into account students' commitments out of school hours, such as sport, part-time employment and home responsibilities
- take into account technology such as computers, E-mail and the Internet without disadvantaging those students who do not have access to this technology
- be marked promptly and accurately so students have regular feedback.

Types of homework

There are three main types of homework:

- **practice exercises**
- **preparatory homework**
- **extension assignments**

Practice exercises let students apply new knowledge or review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills. Examples of such exercises are memorisation of mathematical tables, practising spelling words, essay writing and reading for pleasure.

Preparatory homework where students gain background information on a unit of study to better prepare them for future lessons, for example, reading and collecting geometric shapes.

Extension assignments encourage students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively. Assignments might include writing a book review, researching local news or retrieving items from the Internet.

Kindergarten - Year 2

Generally teachers will not set formal homework in Kindergarten. However, all activities at home or in play can assist children to develop a wide range of knowledge and skills including literacy, numeracy and problem solving. It should also be remembered that self-directed play in unstructured time is important. Language and number concepts can be introduced and consolidated in many family activities, including:

- shopping
- preparation of food
- listening to stories, learning songs and nursery rhymes
- conversations about what is happening at school
- interactive video and computer programs
- reading
- library borrowing
- family outings
- collecting items.

For Years 1 and 2, some formal homework is usually set. For example, students may be asked to complete some simple computations, to copy letters or words, or to complete an activity sheet.

Years 3-6

Teachers will continue to provide guidance and assistance, particularly in the development of study skills, although as students progress they will increasingly work independently on their homework.

Students will experience different types of homework and the amount of time they are expected to spend on homework will be realistic.

Most homework will be set in English, Mathematics and Human Society and its Environment. However, it can be set across all areas of the curriculum.

Years 7-12

Homework will help high school students develop habits of reviewing work undertaken in class.

Parents can expect homework to be set on a regular basis in each subject and that there will be co-ordination to ensure students can complete their homework across all subject areas.

As students move into the senior school parents can expect that homework and study demands will increase.

There will be times when students are provided with the opportunity to negotiate the amount, type and time frames of homework.

What can I do to help?

Parents and caregivers can help by:

- taking an active interest in homework
- ensuring there is time set aside for homework
- encouraging and supporting students to complete homework
- providing, where possible, a dedicated place for homework and study
- assisting teachers to monitor homework by signing completed work if requested and being aware of the amount of homework set
- communicating with teachers any concerns about the nature of homework and their child's approach to homework
- encouraging their children to read and take an interest in current events
- alerting the school to any domestic or extra-curricular activities which may need to be taken into consideration when homework is being set or marked.