

Homework Policy

Dalby State School



Homework should be a positive experience for children and parents, aimed at enhancing the extent to which a child benefits from their learning experiences at school.

RATIONALE

At Dalby State School it is our belief that homework can add value to the school curriculum when focused on consolidating skills, concepts and understanding. However, the benefit of homework does not come from pages of unrelated photocopied worksheets or unreasonable levels of parental assistance. At Dalby State School it is expected that the homework/practise will relate directly to the learning and teaching programs appropriate to the developmental needs of the student. Teachers will ensure that individual classroom homework procedures are communicated clearly to parents and students.

INTRODUCTION

Recent studies relating to the effectiveness and value of homework report wide variations in the recommended amount of time spent on homework and the associated academic benefits. Most research findings do agree that the number of out of school hours per day spent on homework is positively related to student academic achievement but reaches a point where too much appears to be detrimental. "Overall it seems that some homework is better than too much or none at all, however the time on homework needs to be responsive to the student's age and development. The research indicates that a 'more homework the better' view is misleading and should not be the basis for policy or practice." ('Homework Literature Review' Dept. Education and Arts Queensland– November 2004)

HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

Homework provides students with opportunities to consolidate their classroom learning, pattern behaviour for lifelong learning beyond the classroom and involve family members in their learning. The setting of the homework takes into account the need for students to have a balanced lifestyle. This includes sufficient time for family, recreation, cultural pursuits and employment where appropriate.

Homework that enhances student learning:

- Is purposeful and relevant to student needs
- Is appropriate to the phase of learning (early, middle and senior)
- Is appropriate to the capability of the student
- Develops the student's independence as a learner
- Is varied, challenging and clearly related to class work
- Allows for student commitment to recreational, employment, family and cultural activities



RESPONSIBILITIES

Principals:

- Develop a school homework policy, in consultation with their school community, particularly the Parents and Citizens Association.
- Distribute the school homework policy to staff, students, and parents and caregivers, particularly at the time of student enrolment
- Ensure the home policy is effectively implemented throughout the school.
- Include an up-to-date school homework policy as part of their annual reporting.

Teachers:

Teachers can help students establish a routine of regular, independent study by:

- Ensuring their school's homework policy is implemented
- Setting homework on a regular basis
- Clearly communicating the purpose, benefits and expectations of all the homework
- Checking the homework regularly and providing timely and useful feedback
- Using homework that is varied, challenging and directly related to class work and appropriate to students learning needs
- Explicitly teaching strategies to develop organisational and time-management skills and providing opportunities to practise these strategies through homework
- Giving consideration to other academic and personal development activities (school based or other) that Students could be engaged in when setting homework
- Discussing with parents and caregivers any developing problems concerning their child's homework and suggesting strategies to assist with their homework

Students:

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

The role of the parents and caregivers with homework

Parents and Caregivers can help their children by:

- Reading to them, talking with them and involving them in tasks at home including shopping, playing games and physical activity
- Helping them to complete tasks by discussing key questions or directing them to resources
- Encouraging them to organise their time and take responsibility for their learning
- Encouraging them to read and to take an interest in and discuss current local, national and international events
- Helping them to balance the amount of time spent completing homework, watching television, playing computer games, playing sport and engaging in other recreational activities
- Contacting the relevant teacher to discuss any concerns about the nature of homework and their children's approach to the homework



RECOMMENDED HOMEWORK PRACTICE

The guidelines below are examples only. Each classroom will have its own homework rules and routines.

Kindergarten and Pre-Primary

Usually teachers will not set formal homework for these early years. Any homework set at this level should be non-compulsory, but parents are urged to encourage their children to complete activities if they can (for example-regular home reading in Pre-Primary). At this age a strong emphasis on speaking and listening is recommended to enhance the acquisition of literacy, numeracy and problem solving skills. Development of oral language skills can occur in the course of normal household activities such as:

- shopping
- food preparation and meal times
- family outings
- listening to stories
- singing songs and nursery rhymes
- playing
- rehearsing class news
- reading

Some classroom teachers may also send home activities related to phonics or writing (e.g. sound bags, postcards etc.)

YEARS 1-2

10 to 20 minutes per day. Homework may include:

- regular home reading
- reading sight words
- spelling words
- online games and programmes recommended by the school
- counting skills

YEARS 3-5

30-40 minutes per day. Homework may include:

- regular home reading
- reading sight words
- spelling words
- maths revision e.g. times tables
- online games and programmes recommended by the school
- completing unfinished work

YEARS 6-7

Up to 60 minutes per day. Homework may include:

- regular home reading (may include library books, magazines, comics, newspapers)
- maths problems and revision
- online games and programmes recommended by the school
- research for projects and in class assignments
- completing unfinished work
- getting equipment ready for school e.g. sharpening pencils, checking to see if you have enough pens etc.

