

Homework

Rationale

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 homework takes into account the need for students to have a balanced lifestyle. This includes sufficient time for family, recreation and cultural pursuits.

Homework can engage students in independent learning to complement work undertaken in class through:

- revision and critical reflection to consolidate learning (practising for mastery)
- applying knowledge and skills in new contexts (a topic of interest, an authentic local issue)
- pursuing knowledge individually and imaginatively (investigating, researching, writing, designing, making)
- preparing for forthcoming classroom learning (collecting relevant materials, items, information).

Homework Guidelines

The following table is a guide in determining the amount of set homework that students might be expected to undertake. It is of course open to parents to consult with a student's teacher about additional materials or practice exercises with which parents can assist their children at home.

Prescribed levels of homework for different age groups

Prep Year

Generally students will not be set homework

Years 1, 2, 3

Could be up to — but generally not more than — 1 hour each week

Years 4 and 5

Could be up to — but generally not more than — 2 —3 hours each week

Years 6 and 7

Could be up to — but generally not more than — 3 —4 hours each week

In the Early Phase of Learning many activities at home or in play can assist children to develop literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills.

Homework tasks may include;

- daily reading to, with and by parents/ caregivers or other family members
- linking concepts with familiar activities such as shopping, food preparation, local environment and family outings
- conversations about what is happening at school
- preparation for oral presentations
- opportunities to write for meaningful purposes

From Years 4 – 7 some homework can be completed daily or over a weekly or fortnightly period of time and may:

include daily independent reading

be coordinated across different Key Learning Areas

include extension of class work, projects and research.

Parents, teachers and students

Jindalee State School is committed to developing worthwhile and authentic partnerships with its parents. The Department of Education Training and the Arts suggests that parents 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.

Teachers can help students by:

- setting homework in line with the school's homework policy
- clearly communicating the purpose, benefits and expectations of all homework
- checking homework regularly and providing timely and useful feedback
- setting homework that is varied, challenging and directly related to class work and appropriate to students' learning needs
- teaching organisational and time-management skills
- discussing with parents and caregivers any developing problems concerning their child's homework and suggesting strategies to assist with their homework.

Students will be expected to:

- discuss homework expectations with their parents/caregivers
- complete homework within set time frames
- follow up on comments made by teachers
- seek assistance when difficulties arise
- organise their time to allow for home tasks, physical activities and sports, and recreational and cultural activities.
- adhere to the school's homework policy.

Homework Tasks

Some homework tasks will be of a formal nature and may include:

- practice and consolidation exercises eg. number facts and spelling activities
- writing tasks eg. journal writing, handwriting
- reading activities eg. comprehension exercises
- design and make in science and technology
- research tasks

Other homework tasks will be less formal and may include:

- reading and being read to for enjoyment
- observation and discussion
- using the home environment
- drawing
- playing
- current affairs

The Setting of Homework

Individual classroom teachers will be responsible for the setting of homework for their class after consultation with the other teachers on their year level.

Homework expectations will be clearly outlined by the class teacher and communicated via parent meetings, class newsletters and parent / teacher interviews.

Some teachers at Jindalee State School will set their homework in the form of a grid with some tasks being compulsory and others being free choice.

The Home work Grid (based on 'The Homework Grid' by Ian Lillico) enables parents to get children to do their share of work in the home including housework, shopping, physical activity such as sports training and family outings such as walking, fishing and exploring their world. It also covers areas such as reading, being read to, playing a game with parents, research on a computer, music practice and many others. Below is an example of a home work grid for each area of the school:

LOWER SCHOOL

Home reading

Draw a picture

Help your parents with a job

Share your sight words with an adult

Play a game with your family

Count some things around your house

Listen to an adult read a book

Listen to some music

Make up your own game

MIDDLE / UPPER SCHOOL

Read a variety of books

Be read to by another member of the family

Shopping with parents

Physical activity or sports training

Housework

Art

Teach an adult something you were taught at school

Play a game with an adult

Assignments or project research

Meditation or relaxation

Cook a meal

Cultural or music practice

These are just a couple of examples of a homework grid. Class teachers, students and parents can negotiate the grid entries, but it is important to emphasise diversity, family life and active pursuits. The grid will obviously be altered for different age groups and each cell represents approximately 10 minutes work.

Other teachers will set daily, weekly or longer term homework tasks or contracts