



HUNTERS HILL PUBLIC SCHOOL

Homework Guidelines

DEFINITION

Homework is any task assigned by school teachers intended for students to carry out during non-school hours designed to meet specific learning goals.

The Homework Guidelines itself is compulsory, the setting of homework and any indicative time allocations across year level are not. However, Hunters Hill Public School does recognise the importance of homework activities to consolidate learning outcomes in the classroom and all grade levels K-6 do participate in homework. Although completion of homework is not compulsory, it is encouraged and valued at the school.

PURPOSES OF HOMEWORK

The purposes of homework for students at Hunters Hill Public School are outlined below:

Homework:

- is a valuable part of schooling
- allows for practising, extending and consolidating work done in class
- provides training for students in planning and organising their personal time – Parents/caregivers play a role in student development in this area
- develops a range of skills in identifying and using information resources
- encourages habits of study, concentration and self-discipline which will serve students for the rest of their lives
- strengthens home-school links with parental support
- provides parents and caregivers with insights into what is being taught in the classroom and the progress of their children.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Homework is most beneficial when:

- it reinforces and extends classwork, consolidates basic skills and knowledge
- it is challenging and purposeful, but not so demanding that it has adverse effects on the student's motivation
- it develops and extends the core learning skills of inquiry and independent study
- parents and caregivers are involved in the implementation of the school's homework policy
- students take responsibility for their homework, supported by their parents or caregivers
- it is well coordinated and teacher expectations are communicated clearly
- it is set on a regular basis and establishes a routine of home study
- as children become older they learn to manage their time to complete homework and other tasks.
- teachers set suitable amounts of homework which are varied and at an appropriate level considering the age, stage of schooling and capabilities of students
- homework is tailored to the student's level in reading, spelling and maths, but reflects stage work in HSIE, general English, science and art.
- it takes into account students' home responsibilities and extracurricular activities such as clubs, sport and dance
- it is marked and/or commented on in a timely and accurate manner
- it is reviewed by parents and the class teacher.

TYPES OF HOMEWORK

The amount of time that students are expected to spend on homework will depend upon the age, ability, home environment and extracurricular activities of students, including family and cultural obligations. It is important that students of all ages have opportunities for free time, leisure and physical activities outside of school.

The three main types of homework are:

1. Practice exercises – providing students with the opportunities to apply new knowledge, or review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, including:

- finishing class work, physical activities, projects and assignment tasks.
- consolidation exercise e.g. maths, including memorisation of multiplication facts (times tables)
- practising for mastery e.g. spelling words
- revising information about a current topic
- practising words or phrases learnt in a language other than English
- reading for pleasure
- completing writing tasks

2. Preparatory homework – providing opportunities for students to gain background information on a unit of study so that they are better prepared for future lessons, including:

- background reading
- discussion of topics with parents
- reading e.g. English text for class discussion
- researching topics for a class unit or work
- collecting items e.g. geometric shapes
- preparing and practising public speaking notes
- monitoring activities done out of school.

3. Extension assignment – encouraging students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively, including:

- writing e.g. a book review
- making or designing something e.g. an art work
- investigations e.g. science, social science
- researching e.g. history, local news
- information and retrieval skills e.g. using a home computer to find material on the Internet
- monitoring e.g. advertising in particular newspapers, on television or the internet.
- problem solving exercises

Where research projects are set, the aim of the assignment will be given to the students. This will include a particular emphasis on process, content or presentation. In addition, in class support will be given and the timeframe for completion will be outlined.

Wherever possible homework should recognise the place of technology such as home computers, e-mail and the internet for organising and accessing information. Schools however, should have regard for equity issues when setting homework that relies upon the use of technology. Students who do not have access to such technology at home should not be disadvantaged.

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE

EARLY STAGE 1

Kindergarten

The following formal activities start towards the end of Term 1. As the year progresses, simple homework tasks are set that consolidate learning in the classroom. Students are also encouraged to participate in our daily Home Reading Program. Homework activities include:

- sight words
- home reading program
- online mathematics and reading programs

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 times 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.

STAGE 2

Year 1 and 2

In Stage 1 consideration should be given to the setting of formal homework. However, the approximate time recommended is 15 minutes per night (Monday-Thursday). This includes reading time. Homework activities include:

- DIPL sight words – lists are sent home for students to learn
- DIPL spelling lists and activities
- topic talks – linked to units in Science and Technology, History and Geography
- mathematics activities
- home reading program
- online reading and comprehension program
- online mathematics program
- optional extension activities based on higher order questioning and creative thinking

STAGE 2 & 3

Years 3 to 6

Although as students progress they increasingly work independently on their homework it is important that teachers continue to provide guidance and assistance particularly in the development of study skills.

It is also important that students have the opportunity to experience different types of homework and that the amount of time students are expected to work on homework is realistic. **As a general guide the amount of time for students in Stage 2 is 30 minutes per night including reading and for Stage 3 students is 30-45 minutes per night (Monday-Thursday).** This is an average, and includes 20 - 30 minutes reading time.

Although most homework is likely to be set in the areas of English, Mathematics and Human Society and its Environment, it could be set across all areas of the curriculum.

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

In Stage 2, homework activities include:

- spelling activities relating to weekly spelling lists
- reading contracts
- mathematics activities that consolidate concepts and learning covered in class
- multiplication activities
- problem solving
- topic talks
- term class and home projects (including talks)
- specific literacy and numeracy activities tailored to meet student's individual learning needs- when requested
- extension activities including term projects

In Stage 3, homework activities include:

- spelling activities relating to weekly spelling lists
- mathematics activities that consolidate concepts and learning covered in class
- multiplication activities
- problem solving
- independent reading at home
- preparation for speeches
- term research projects
- specific literacy and numeracy activities tailored to meet student's individual learning needs
- extension activities tailored to meet student's individual goals and learning outcomes

EXPECTATIONS – Role Statement

Parents and caregivers can help by:

- taking an active interest in homework
- ensuring that there is time set aside for homework
- encouraging and supporting students to complete homework
- providing, where possible, a dedicated place and desk for homework and study
- encouraging their children to read and take an interest in current events
- 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 children's approach to the homework
- alerting the school to any domestic or extracurricular activities which may need to be taken into consideration when homework is being set or corrected.

Teachers can help by:

- explaining to students and their parents or caregivers the purpose and benefits of homework
- ensuring students and parents or caregivers are aware of the school's homework policy
- providing quality homework activities related to classwork
- setting a suitable amount of relevant homework which is appropriate to the ability of each student
- ensuring that students are aware of what is expected of them, and how their work will be assessed

- giving students sufficient time to complete their homework, taking into account, as far as possible, competing home obligations and extracurricular activities and homework set by other teachers
- marking homework promptly and appropriately, maintaining homework records and providing feedback to students and parents
- alerting parents or caregivers of any developing problems concerning their children's homework and suggesting strategies that they can use to assist their children with their homework.
- having a positive approach towards, with appropriate rewards and encouragement for completion.

Students can help by:

- being aware of the importance of homework
- being aware of their school's homework guidelines
- completing homework within the given time frame
- alerting parents or caregivers to homework expectations
- seeking assistance from teachers and parents or caregivers when difficulties arise
- showing their homework to their parents or caregivers (this is perhaps not as important in senior high school years)
- ensuring homework is of a high standard
- organising their time to ensure that sufficient time is given to quality homework within set deadlines.