

# ROWENA PUBLIC SCHOOL HOMEWORK POLICY

## **Underlying Principles**

It is the feeling of the staff, parents and students of Rowena Public School that a reasonable amount of homework is seen as a worthwhile part of the School Program and an integral part of children's development of a sense of responsibility and their role in the production of quality work.

## **Beliefs**

Purposeful homework plays an important part in a child's learning and in developing positive home study habits.

## **Homework Guidelines**

- The purpose of homework, like schoolwork is to promote learning.
- Homework is a partnership between the home and school and is a shared responsibility.
- Homework should be a purposeful learning experience, which consolidates, extends and enriches the class program.
- Homework should cater for the needs of students.
- Homework is an essential part of the learning process.
- Homework done well will assist in developing the study skills necessary to allow children to improve learning outcomes, in keeping with their ability.
- Homework provides an opportunity for parents to become involved in their child's learning and to gain some knowledge of what is taking place within the class. It enhances the communication between school and home.
- Homework is not to be viewed as a device for securing classroom or home discipline.
- Parents can decide not to have their children do homework. The school and class teacher should be notified of this in writing.
- Homework is a valuable experience when viewed in a positive light.
- Homework should be included in the normal routine of the family.

## **Time Spent on Homework**

It is difficult to determine exactly what amount of time should be spent on homework. We must remember what takes one child thirty minutes to do well may take another much longer. Teachers need to consider the work habits and ability of children when setting homework tasks.

## **Recommended Times**

These are estimated times recommended by the Department of Education and Training. It is recommended that students spend the following times on homework per night:

- Infants: 10 – 15 minutes
- Years 3 & 4: 15 – 20 minutes
- Years 5 & 6: 20 – 40 minutes

## **The Nature of Homework**

Homework can be of a formal nature i.e. work set by the class teacher that is task specific. Homework can be of an informal nature and could include reading, learning tables, learning spelling, conducting research, preparing a speech or revision of class tests.

The role of teachers is to:

- ✚ Ensure homework is related to the work being done at school.
- ✚ Set homework which allows students to demonstrate what they are capable of and which challenges them to progress.
- ✚ Give students sufficient time for the completion of tasks.
- ✚ Ensure students are aware of what is expected of them, and how their work will be assessed.
- ✚ Help parents understand what homework is required, and when it's due, through requesting them to sign off their child's work.
- ✚ Communicate with parents about areas of concern related to homework.
- ✚ Assess homework to determine achievement by students.
- ✚ Maintain student homework records.

The task of students is to:

- ✚ Complete homework within the given time frame.
- ✚ Maintain a homework record for their teacher and parents.

Parents and caregivers can help by:

- ✚ Supporting students in completing their homework.
- ✚ Provide, if possible, a dedicated place and desk for homework and study.
- ✚ Assist teacher to monitor homework, by signing off tasks according to the timeline indicated in the student's homework record or diary.
- ✚ Communicating with teachers about any concerns with homework or their child's approach to homework.

## **Suggested Content**

### **Infants K-2**

#### **Kindergarten**

#### ***Parents play a vital role in the execution of homework in Kindergarten***

- 1 Kindergarten children, with their parents, are encouraged to learn phonics and sight words, as appropriate to the term overview.
- 2 Follow-up on teacher-made recommendations regarding specific needs i.e. remediation, extension
- 3 Students will read a home reader each night and return reading journal each day.

## **Year 1**

- 1 Students will use a spelling journal with a personal list of words, which are learnt and revised over three nights and returned to the class teacher on the fourth day for new words to be added.
- 2 A home reader which the children are expected to borrow and return on a daily basis. Children are expected to read aloud to parents and to discuss the story and its contents with them. A reading journal is to be kept and returned weekly to school.
- 3 Minimum research activities for Science and Technology, HSIE, and Maths which may involve collecting photos, magazine pictures, literature, statistics etc

## **Year 2**

- 1 Worksheets given out every Monday and brought back on Thursday or Friday.
- 2 Reinforcement of concepts taught in the classroom to let parents know what themes or topics are being studied in the classroom.
- 3 A home reader which the children are expected to borrow and return on a daily basis. A reading journal returned each Friday will support this activity and will contain nightly signatures registered by parents.
- 4 Development of children's skills in Language and Mathematics. Children have a list of spelling words and number facts. The spelling words are adjusted to the child's level.

## **Primary 3 –6**

- 1 Children are expected to do the allocated time in home study with homework given out on Monday and returned to the class teacher by Friday.
- 2 Homework will be related to work occurring in the classroom. This means that the homework will vary from time to time.
- 3 A nightly reading component will form part of Years 3 – 6, nightly homework.
- 4 Homework will include:
  - Spelling activities designed to reinforce and enhance learning of personal spelling list words.
  - Number facts and tables for memorization.
  - Formal homework will be given to reinforce what is learned in class, by having children practice and revise work or skills. It is intended to be done individually and with as little assistance from parents as possible.

- Tasks may be set which involve ‘getting ready’ activities. This may mean gathering information from everyday or family experience, or watching particular TV shows or commercials. It may mean finding examples at home of objects that demonstrate a concept.
- Children may be asked to work on their research at home for a particular assignment being completed in class. This allows for time to find extra information from other sources not available at school.
- Extension homework may involve such things as writing book reviews, stories, poems, songs, making and designing something either creatively or to a design brief. As some children find this type of independent activity more difficult than others, teachers should try to give children a number of tasks that they can choose from over the term, making this homework optional.
- Extension homework which is offered to students would be considered an optional student activity in terms of completion.

## **Evaluation**

The teaching staff and School Council are responsible for the annual review of the homestudy policy. The review will be based on the success of the program offered and any problems that are identified during evaluation time.

Specifically, the evaluation will examine the recommended times for each grade, the suitability of chosen tasks, level of parental support, and flexibility of the document in terms of implementation.

Last Review May 2012      Next review May 2014