The purpose of homework

The purpose of homework at St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School is two-fold:

- to seek to develop in our students the necessary skills to establish effective study habits, including self-discipline and time management skills, for life-long learning
- to provide an opportunity for parents to connect with what their children are doing at school.

The underlying premise of our policy is that:

*Successful schools see education as a collaborative process between the student, parents and the school, and consider parents to be ‘partners’ in their child’s education.*

Australian Council of Educational Research, 2014

We see the development of this policy as being an opportunity to further embed our Core Values of Community, Compassion, Respect and Stewardship, into all that we do at St Joseph’s.

Sources of input in the development of this policy

We have structured our Homework Policy, utilising elements of feedback from research, staff beliefs about the efficacy of homework and feedback around the expectations of our parent community.

The research overwhelmingly states that at primary school level, homework has little or no academic benefits (Horsley and Walker, 2013). We acknowledge, however, together with many Stage Three parents that homework *can have the potential to* help prepare students in terms of organisational skills, for their transition to high school.

In addressing these considerations, we at St Joseph’s believe that homework needs to reflect a balance between its benefits and the impact on family life and leisure, cultural and other pursuits that are proven to have a positive impact on student well-being.

Definition of Homework

Homework is broadly defined as:

*Student learning activities conducted outside of school hours, as assigned by the classroom teacher.*

(Cambridge English Dictionary)

What are the expectations on completion of homework?

At St Joseph’s School, we will set homework for our students, however we will not enforce the completion of homework. Parents may consult with their child’s teacher in order to reduce the amount of homework or request an exemption for that year.
What will be set for homework?
Homework at St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School is set according to the following guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Reading time per night</th>
<th>Homework</th>
<th>Suggested homework time per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Stage 1</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td><strong>Reading</strong> and high frequency words, Preparation for Let’s Talk sessions</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Kindergarten)</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Optional:</strong> class Weebly activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td><strong>Reading</strong> Literacy-based activities, Numeracy-based activities</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 1 and 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally: Religious Education/integrated unit home-link activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Optional:</strong> class Weebly activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td><strong>Reading</strong> Literacy-based activities, Numeracy-based activities</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 3 and 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally: Religious Education/integrated unit home-link activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Optional:</strong> class Weebly activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td><strong>Reading</strong> Literacy-based activities, Numeracy-based activities</td>
<td>80 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 5 and 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Religious Education/integrated unit home-link activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Optional:</strong> class Weebly activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What will be given as homework?
- Reading, including a weekly reading log
- Literacy-based activities
- Numeracy-based activities
- Occasionally: Religious Education or Integrated Unit home-link tasks
- Optional class Weebly tasks

When will homework be set?
Homework will begin in Week Two and end in Week Nine of each term. This excludes our St Joseph’s Wellbeing Week, where no homework will be given. Home-link tasks may sometimes be also be given in Week One, where necessary.

How much help should parents give?
It is expected that most students should be able to complete the majority of their homework independently. Homework set across the grades contains levels of difficulty, and teachers will take into account those students who have special educational needs (continued overleaf).
Whilst homework will generally be set at a level that students can complete independently, this should not discourage parents from taking an active role in supporting their child at home. Students have individual learning needs and will need varying levels of assistance. Home Reading with a parent is always encouraged.

We acknowledge the research, which states that the skills of independent, self-directed learning can be developed when students receive organisational and other assistance from their parents. (Horsley and Walker, 2013).

The following website provides some very useful tips for parents who are seeking to support their children in developing organisational skills around homework:


When will this policy be reviewed?

This policy will be reviewed in September 2017.

Guidelines for teachers

- Set realistic, purposeful, grade appropriate homework
- Maintain a clear progression of homework by using the St Joseph’s School Homework Grid
- Provide feedback including signing and dating completed homework
- Provide clear instructions as to how to complete homework
- Make clear the completion day and date for homework
- Supply homework book to record homework
- Ensure that homework is not set in Wellbeing Week of each term

Guidelines for parents

- Read and sign the homework grid each week
- Take an active interest your child’s homework and try support a positive approach to homework
- Provide a dedicated place and resources for homework and study, if possible.
- Communicate with teachers any concerns about the nature of homework or your child's approach to homework.
- Encourage your child to read and take an interest in current events.
- Alert the school to any domestic circumstances or extra curricular activities that may need to be taken into consideration when homework is being set or marked.
- Oversee correct completion of homework

Guidelines for students

- Communicate with parents to inform them of homework
- Attempt to organise their time so that they can complete their homework in the given timeframe, taking into consideration extra-curricular activities
- Consult with their teacher if they are having difficulty with a particular homework task, well before the due date
- Submit homework on time