MAPLETON STATE SCHOOL

Homework Policy

Homework provides students with opportunities to consolidate their classroom learning, practice life skills required beyond the classroom and home 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, cultural and employment where appropriate.

There is no evidence to suggest a link between lengthy homework tasks and success at university. However, there is evidence that suggests a link between organisation and time management skills and success at university. This is especially evident in the Year Seven homework research tasks that are designed to develop such skills in preparation for High School.

Homework that enhances student learning:

- is purposeful and relevant to students needs and capability
- develops the student's independence as a learner
- is varied, challenging and clearly related to class work

There is no doubt that children need to practise concepts learnt at school, within time constraints, but the definition of 'homework' needs to be reassessed to include any work that children do at home that will benefit them and contribute to shared family time. Specifically, projects and assignments set for Year 7 students assist them to manage their family/social life around their educational commitments.

Homework tasks need to be organised to take the following into consideration:

- Families with working parents, more than one child.
- After school commitments – sports/music/work etc. Homework may be set Monday to Monday to allow weekend time for ‘busy’ students, however the school does not expect students to complete homework in the weekend.
- Time constraints:
  - Prep no homework
  - Years 1-3 no more than one hour per week
  - Years 4 and 5 students are recommended to have less that two or three hours a week
  - Years 6 and 7 should have no more than three or four hours a week

Homework expectations will be clearly outlined by the class teacher and communicated via parent meetings, class newsletters and parent/teacher interviews. Students, teachers, parents/caregivers and school principal all have responsibilities to ensure this homework policy is followed. It is not the responsibility of the class teacher to provide extra activities or extension work for students to complete outside school hours.

Consequences when Homework tasks are not completed

Homework expectations and the consequence of students failing to complete homework tasks will be clearly outlined by the class teacher. Consequences may include student may have their attendance to non essential learning activities limited or their free choice classroom time may be limited to completing homework tasks.
Responsibilities

Principals:
- Develop a school homework policy, in consultation with their school community.
- Distribute the school homework policy to parents and caregivers at enrolment
- Include an up-to-date school homework policy as part of the school prospectus.

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 homework
- checking homework regularly and provide timely and useful feedback
- using homework that is varied, challenging and directly related to class work and appropriate to students' learning needs to enhance literacy and numeracy skills (e.g. Lower and Middle Primary: Reading, Spelling/Words and Number Facts; Upper Primary: Projects and assignment tasks utilising research, spelling, writing, numeracy skills)
- explicitly teaching strategies to develop organisational, research and time-management skills and providing opportunities to practice 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 can take responsibility for their own learning by:
- being aware of the school's homework policy
- accepting responsibility for the completion of homework tasks within set time frames
- 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.

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
- encouraging them to organise their time and take responsibility for their learning -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.