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# HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

## Our Homework Philosophy

At Elsterwick Primary School, we believe that regular homework opportunities support children in consolidating their learning. Balancing school life with time spent on extra-curricular activities, relaxation and time with family and friends is an essential part of maintaining a healthy sense of wellbeing.

Our philosophy has been created based on expert research and Departmental Guidelines (Department of Education and Training Victoria). We have also conducted forums with staff, parents, and students to gain an insight into their beliefs about what positive and effective homework practices look like. This extensive consultation process has helped us to create our Homework Guidelines, which we believe will support students, parents/carers and teachers with home learning practices.

## What does homework look like at EPS?

The Department of Education and Training Guidelines recommends the following times for homework allocation. This is designed so that throughout their primary schooling, children are gradually building stamina and balanced homework studying habits.

**Year One to Year Four:** 30minutes each night

**Year Five and Six:** 30-45 minutes each night

Year	Reading	Writing	Mathematics	Flipped Learning	Total each night
Prep <b>SEM1</b>	5 minutes	High Frequency Words Letter/sound revision <b>5 minutes</b>			<b>10 minutes</b>
Prep <b>SEM2</b>	10 minutes	High Frequency Words Letter/sound revision <b>5 minutes</b>			<b>15 minutes</b>
Year 1	15 minutes	Word Work <b>5 minutes</b>	<b>Activities that support the learning in the classroom.</b> Examples include: Maths Games Maths Talks/Activities	<b>As needed to support the learning in the classroom</b> Teacher directed, tasks will vary.	<b>25 minutes</b> <b>30 mins (+flipped)</b>
Years 2-4	15 minutes	Literacy Tasks <b>5 minutes</b>			<b>25 minutes</b> <b>30 mins (+flipped)</b>
Years 5 & 6	25 minutes	Literacy Tasks <b>10 minutes</b>			<b>40 minutes</b> <b>45 mins (+flipped)</b>

## Homework Timetable

Teachers will encourage students to create a homework timetable to help them effectively manage their school with extra-curricular activities.

## Homework Cycle

Homework is based on a weekly cycle. **Within the 7 days**, students **need to choose 5 days** to complete their homework. For example, Monday- Friday and no homework on the weekends, or Mon-Wed and Sat-Sun. The homework is explained to students on a Monday and is due the following Monday. If required, opportunities to watch Flipped Learning clips and engage in online games/tasks either before school or during lunchtimes can be provided.

## Homework Expectations

While it is an expectation that children complete their homework by the due date and in line with our EPS Homework Guidelines, parents/carers may discuss with their classroom teacher any variations to these expectations that may be required. If students require an extension, parents/carers can communicate this request to their child's classroom teacher prior to the due date. If a student requires assistance from their teacher, they should seek it prior to the due date.

If students fail to submit their homework by the due date (without an alternative arrangement organised with parents), students will complete their homework at school, during an arranged lunch time. This will be communicated to parents via email.

**Teachers** will support your child by:

- setting varied, meaningful tasks related to class work to suit the students' learning needs
- giving students enough time to complete homework, considering home obligations and extracurricular activities
- assessing homework and providing timely and practical feedback and support
- helping students develop organisational and time-management skills

**Parents** can support their child by:

- developing a positive and productive approach to homework
- ensuring there is a balance between the time spent on homework and recreational activities
- talking to teachers about any concerns they have about the homework

**Students** can take responsibility for their own learning by:

- being aware of the school's homework expectations
- discussing with their parents or caregivers homework expectations
- accepting responsibility for the completion of homework tasks within set time frames
- organising their time to manage home obligations, participation in physical activity and sports

## Correcting Homework: Giving and receiving feedback

Professor John Hattie's research suggests that student feedback should be timely, goal specific, and focus on where the student is at, their next steps in learning and how to achieve their goals. The nature of homework precludes timely feedback. For example, for teachers to conference with students to provide meaningful, relevant and timely feedback about homework, it would take up to two hours of teaching time.

## **Tips to support and extend your child through homework**

### **Providing a Literacy-Rich Home Environment**

One of the most effective approaches to helping young children develop literacy skills is having a home environment that supports literacy. Books are the key ingredient to creating a literacy-rich home environment.

Families can support language and literacy learning by creating a home atmosphere in which reading, writing, talking, and listening are a natural part of daily life. Reading to and with your child promotes love of reading for life.

### **Make Reading Materials Available**

To create a healthy reading environment, start with a good supply of reading materials—newspapers, magazines, books, and catalogues. It doesn't matter if they're owned or borrowed, new or used. What's important is that reading materials are a natural part of your home and everyday life. A small collection of books thoughtfully gathered over time is better than a large collection that goes unread. Paperback and hardcover books, a dictionary, an atlas, songbooks, magazines for parents and kids, newspapers, and catalogues all have a place. Make sure your library includes something for everyone at every reading level.

### **Writing Habits**

Encourage your child to write, write, write. Provide many opportunities such as writing shopping lists, letters & postcards to friends and relatives, keeping a diary or journal of a holiday, emails, personal stories (which may be labelled drawings), and leaving notes.

Give your child the time and your full attention to read their stories to you. Positive comments on the strategies and behaviours your child uses when writing are meaningful.

Avoid comments on spelling and punctuation.

Draw attention to writing and drawing in the environment – street signs, labels, billboards – these are models of writing for real purposes.

Create a community of writers in your home. Provide a quiet place for writing with lots of writing materials at hand. Leave notes for each other, send messages in lunch boxes, play writing games, write together.

### **Writer's Notebook**

The Writer's Notebook is a place for students to collect ideas from their life experiences which may prove valuable in later writing. It's a place to record thoughts, feelings, sensations, observations and opinions. It is also a place where artefacts can be collected for inspiration. The Writer's Notebook is not a place for adults to correct spelling or punctuation and grammar, it is a creative space where students 'plant seeds' for writing ideas which will later develop and grow. You can support your child at home by talking to them about their many experiences, memories, thoughts, observations and understandings of the world.

You can also assist them to collect artefacts which could be placed into the notebook and written about.

#### **Artefacts may include;**

1. Tickets (movies, plane, fun parks, sporting events etc)
2. Cards (birthday, postcards etc)
3. Newspaper/magazine articles of interest
4. Photos (pets, family members, events)
5. Drawings (a small sketch to summarise an event/moment)

Please be aware that teachers will guide your child on how to best use their Writer's Notebook as part of their homework each week.

## Helping your child with primary school Mathematics

Young children have numerous mathematical experiences each and every day. They read numbers on a clock, operate a remote control, count their toys and decide how many biscuits they want. As they grow, they will learn to measure play-dough, fill their water bottle and pack their belongings so that they fit into a bag. They will also portion out food into equal shares, calculate the time left in a day and use words to describe where things are, such as over, under and next to. As you can see, Mathematics *is* everywhere in our children's lives (and in ours too!).

The nature of teaching and learning Mathematics has changed since we were at school. For example, research now suggests that rote learning 'times tables' is not necessarily the best way to learn, as children need to make connections with numbers and visual representations of these numbers, too. (*Jo Boaler, Professor of Mathematics Education at the Stanford Graduate School of Education. Mathematics Mindsets*).

Mathematics homework tasks are designed to be engaging and enable your child to practice knowledge and skills learnt at school. The games/tasks/discussions/activities are designed to meet the wide range of learning needs which exist in each year level. They are adaptive and allow your child to practice skills at their own pace. Teachers will provide new tasks/activities each homework cycle. **These will be in line with the content learned in class and assist in the consolidation of learning.**

If you wish to further support or extend your child further with mathematics at home, the following resources may be a useful:

- Study Ladder
- ABC splash
- Mixed Up Maths (ABC education)
- Fuse (Primary Students)

## Flipped Classroom: What is it?

The flipped classroom is a learning model which enables students to prepare for upcoming learning in class. For example, short videos could be viewed at home and then discussed and built on at school. So, in essence, children are using homework time to prepare themselves on what will be taught the following week.

You can support your child by discussing their new learning from the task with them prior to the end of the homework cycle. This will help them to process new information and enable them to structure their thoughts to share with their class in the following week.