

Rationale:

- Homework benefits students if/when it is purposeful, fosters good study habits and provides an opportunity for students to be responsible for their own learning. It is also effective when feedback is provided in a timely manner, if/when the homework requires a response.

Aims:

- To support and/or extend classroom learning via repetition and/or frontloading.
- To develop positive study habits and organisation.
- To develop a responsibility for self-learning and promote effort.
- To provide relevant feedback, in a timely manner

Implementation:

- The school's homework policy is available to be viewed on the school's website and/or via the school's tiqbiz application.
- Classroom teachers will set homework appropriate to the age level of students*.
- Homework activities will be relevant and purposeful.

Early Years (Prep – Year 4)

Homework can consist of (but is not limited to):

- Reading activities, which will encourage parents and other supportive adults to assist in various set tasks, including Reading Eggs. Students should be encouraged to read every night, in order to enhance their language and comprehension. Reading nightly should not be enforced punitively but should be promoted as a fun and supportive activity.
- Additional tasks will be set as appropriate.
- Homework should not exceed 30 minutes per night.
- The online programs, such as Mathletics and Reading Eggs, will be encouraged as a homework activity that develops responsibility and promotes effort and engagement.

Middle Years (Years 5 – 6)

Homework can consist of (but is not limited to):

- Reading activities, which will encourage parents and other supportive adults to assist in various set tasks, including Reading Eggs. Students should be encouraged to read every night, in order to enhance their language and comprehension. Reading nightly should not be enforced punitively but should be promoted as a fun and supportive activity. Reading can include novels, newspaper articles, comic books, research etc...

- Tasks such as the continuation of classroom work not completed during class time, to promote the development of time management skills, both at school and at home. This is not to be delivered in a punitive manner.
- Projects/research and assignments, where appropriate.
- The online programs, such as Mathletics and Reading Eggs, will be encouraged as a homework activity that develops responsibility and promotes effort and engagement.

Related research to be read in support of the formulation and acceptance of this UPPS Homework Policy:

- DEECD (2012) guidelines for schools:
 - Early years (Prep-4) not more than 30 minutes per day – not on weekends or vacations.
 - Middle Years (Years 5-9) not more than 30-45 minutes per day.
- Effort spent on homework is a stronger correlate of academic achievement than time spent on homework (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009)
- The amount of homework and time spent on it should accord with the student's age and developmental level (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009).
- Homework is affected by more factors than most other instructional strategies: the home environment, student aptitude, motivation, and age may all influence homework's effect favourably or otherwise (Blazer, 2009).
- Supporters claim that homework has non-academic benefits, especially for younger students (HMI for Education and Training in Wales, 2004), including: improving students' time management and organisational skills (Blazer, 2009; Dixon, 2007); improving attitudes toward school and showing that learning can take place outside of the classroom (Blazer, 2009; Cooper, 1989; Cooper, Robinson & Patall, 2006; Queensland Government Department of Education and the Arts, 2004; HMI for Education and Training in Wales, 2004); fostering a sense of personal responsibility and self-discipline (Blazer, 2009; Cooper, 1989; Dixon, 2007). However, Hattie (2009) argues that there is no evidence that homework helps students develop time management skills.
- Dr Sue Thomson, a Senior Research Fellow with the Australian Council for Educational Research, notes that many of the countries with the highest scoring students on achievement tests, such as Japan, Denmark, and the Czech Republic, assign little homework.
- ...the more homework a nation's teachers give, the poorer that country's results on the achievement tests (Thomson, quoted in Dixon, 2007).
- Homework can widen social inequalities (Blazer, 2009). Children from poorer homes are likely to have more difficulty completing homework since they may work after school or have nowhere at home to study (Cooper, 1989; Cooper, Robinson & Patall, 2006; Dixon, 2007; Queensland Government Department of Education and the Arts, 2004).

- One recent Australian study found that there has been no research done on whether homework teaches responsibility, self-discipline, or motivation (Moorman & Haller, 2011).
- As a teaching strategy, homework can have major limitations. Since the work is done in the absence of a qualified teacher and there is no control over who actually completes the homework (Blazer, 2009; Hattie, 2009) cheating is likely to be commonplace (Blazer, 2009; Cooper, 1989; Forster, 2000).
- Homework can inhibit independent learning because students become preoccupied with work assigned by someone else (Blazer, 2009). It can curtail the time available for other activities, such as sports and community activities (Blazer, 2009; Cooper, 1989; Cooper & Valentine, 2001; Dixon, 2007; Forster, 2000). There is evidence that homework does cause stress for students (Blazer, 2009) and it may even create tension between parent and child (Blazer, 2009; Cooper, 1989).
- The 'more homework the better' view has no research support (Cooper, H, 2001).
- The quality of the homework assigned is likely to be more important than the quantity (Canadian Education Association, & Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 2010).
- Homework must be purposeful and relevant to student needs and should not jeopardise the right of children to enjoy a balanced lifestyle (Dixon, 2007).

In summary, most researchers conclude that for primary students, there is no evidence that homework lifts academic performance. (Cooper, 1989; Walker, 2011).

Only in the senior years of high school does homework clearly raise academic performance. Parent involvement in homework should be kept to a minimum. Many studies show minimal and even somewhat negative effects when parents are asked to help students with homework. Parents should not solve content problems for their children. However, promoting 'incidental learning' with children can be done 'anytime'. Parents are encouraged to promote learning by integrating language, numeracy, spelling and reading in every day interactions. The promotion of practical and/or physical activities, such as sport, music, art and crafts complement a child's education more so than the traditional view of homework, therefore, students and parents are encouraged to engage in meaningful experiences, social activities and sporting events outside of school hours.

Evaluation: This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.