

# HOMework POLICY

Revised February 2018



Esk State School

## **DET homework policy summary**

It is a requirement for all Queensland State Schools to develop a school homework policy as specified in the DET document *P-12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework*.

The DET policy statement *Homework* states that a school homework policy is developed, disseminated and reviewed in consultation with the school community, as per the DET policy document *Parent and community engagement framework*.

At Esk State School we believe that a carefully implemented and monitored homework policy ensures that:

- there is a consistent approach to the amount of time students are to spend in completing homework for each different year level.
- the amount of homework is balanced across all learning areas and allows sufficient time for family, recreation, community and cultural activities.
- students are not disadvantaged by the lack of access to resources such as computers, the internet, and other resources required.
- homework provides students with opportunities to support and consolidate their classroom learning.
- patterns of behaviour for lifelong learning beyond the classroom are developed.

Homework is most effective when it:

- is clearly related to class work.
- is appropriate to a student's particular phase of schooling.
- is varied and differentiated to individual learning needs.
- consolidates, revises and/or applies students' classroom learning.
- develops students' independence as a learner through extension activities such as investigating, researching, writing, designing and making.
- assists students to prepare for upcoming classroom learning, such as collecting relevant materials and information, completing surveys and audits.
- is monitored by the teacher and feedback is provided.
- is valued by parents and carers.

## **Homework expectations at Esk State School**

At Esk State School, teachers will provide homework for all students.

Parents and carers may wish to discuss individual homework arrangements with their child's/children's teacher/s.

Teachers will provide regular feedback to children who complete their homework.

Parents and carers are encouraged to provide feedback to teachers about the homework load for their child/children.

Students at Esk State School will be rewarded for completing their homework. Students will receive:

- 2 gotchas for each *required homework task* that is handed in on time, and completed satisfactorily. *Required* tasks include daily reading, literacy and numeracy practice.
- 1 gotcha for each other *optional* task that is handed in on-time and completed satisfactorily. *Optional* tasks include activities from PE, Music, Languages and The Arts, as well as home-based chores and family activities.
- Teachers may use their discretion to reward students in other ways as they see fit. These may include rewards for consistently completing homework each week of a term and doing extra homework.
- Parents and carers are encouraged to reward their children for completing all or parts of their homework.

### **The purpose of homework at Esk State School**

At Esk State School, we believe that homework is effective in supporting learning when it has a clear purpose, when it enhances learning taking place at school, and when it helps children develop good study routines and habits at home.

Therefore, homework is:

- clearly related to class work.
- purposeful and relevant to students needs.
- appropriate to the phase of learning (early, middle, senior).
- varied and differentiated to individual learning needs.
- develops students' independence as a learner.

The purpose of homework is to engage students in independent learning to complement work undertaken in class through:

- revision and reflection to consolidate learning (practise for mastery)
- applying knowledge and skills in new contexts (a topic of interest, an authentic local issue)
- pursuing knowledge individually and imaginatively (investigating, researching, writing, designing, making)
- preparing for forthcoming classroom learning (collecting relevant materials and information)

## Guidelines for frequency and length of homework at Esk State School

Homework may be completed daily or over a weekly period and can take many forms. The age and grade of students, the purpose of the homework, and the requirements of each learning area are all determining factors.

As a general rule, at Esk State School homework will be distributed and collected on a weekly basis, covering the equivalent of four night's work.

Each class teacher will provide specific details to students and their parents and carers about the routine for each class. Parents and carers are asked to guide their children in scheduling and allowing sufficient time during the week to complete the required homework content.

The Queensland Government has set out guidelines for homework, including the amount of time students should spend on homework each week. At Esk State School, it is recommended that students spend the following amounts of time doing homework:

Prep	- up to but generally not more than 15 minutes per day.
Years 1, 2 and 3	- up to but generally not more than 15-20 minutes per day.
Years 4 to 5	- up to but generally not more than 2-3 hours per week.
Year 6	- up to but generally not more than 3-4 hours per week

Homework should be purposeful experience for children and their parents and carers, and is not intended to be a stressful burden. If a child is having difficulty with a task, then leave the task and inform the teacher. Family-life is a priority and parents and carers are encouraged to help children develop a healthy balance between school life and home life.

Homework is at its best when parents, carers and other family members can become involved with the students.

## Homework Format at Esk State School

Homework at Esk State School is set out in a grid format. Each cell includes an activity that either consolidates learning at school or involves participating in a specific activity, eg. a job around the house, physical activity, reading to a family member, being read to, playing a game, or a cultural activity.

The activities included in the grid will vary between year levels, however daily reading is essential to all year levels Prep to Year 6.

All students from Prep to Year 6 are expected to engage in daily reading. Reading and word knowledge experienced through text and oral language interactions are essential for learning. The more interactive language a child experiences through books and conversation with others (not passively from digital devices), the more advantaged socially and educationally that child will be for the rest of his or her life. The development of language skills is linked positively to thinking skills and school results.

Esk State School has adopted ***The Homework Grid*** as the standard format for delivering homework. The Homework Grid was developed by the Perth-based Principal and education researcher Dr Ian Lillico. The Homework Grid format:

- recognises the wide range of subject areas covered weekly at school.
- recognises the wide range of after-school activities that children are involved in.
- allows relaxed time for children to pursue their own learning.
- acknowledges that children can learn to do a range of age and ability-appropriate jobs and chores at home.
- acknowledges that recreational and physical activities, and activities that enhance family life are important parts of the “work” that children can engage in at home.
- acknowledges that children need life skills as well as academic skills to cope with life at and beyond school.
- encourages parents, carers and teachers to work together for the benefit of all children.

The Esk State School Homework Grid contains cells representing a discreet learning opportunity for students. The level of complexity and time required to complete tasks will vary across year levels and according to individual student learning needs. The presentation of the homework grid will look different for each year level with the Prep version containing less, through to Year 6 which will contain more or be more complex. Each class however will base their homework grid on the following template:

<p><b>**READING</b></p> <p><i>Students read or are read to a variety of books from home or school daily.</i></p>	<p><b>**SPELLING / VOCAB</b></p> <p><i>Students practice sight words, vocabulary and spelling words.</i></p>	<p><b>**MATHS</b></p> <p><i>Students practice some of the maths and numeracy skills and processes being learnt in class.</i></p>
<p><b>*MUSIC</b></p> <p><i>This may include practice times for students in the Instrumental Music Program, or some other music-based activity relating to work being done at school.</i></p>	<p><b>*HPE</b></p> <p><i>Students should engage in some physical or cooperative game or activity at home. Activities may include playing an outdoor game, helping to prepare a healthy school lunch, or doing a family activity.</i></p>	<p><b>*LANGUAGES (Indonesian)</b></p> <p><i>Students will have a chance to practice their oral and written language skills and to share cultural experiences from Indonesia with family members.</i></p>
<p><b>*DAILY CHORE</b></p> <p><i>Students can be expected to help at home by doing age and ability relevant jobs. These may include things like drying the dishes, making their bed, washing the dog, feeding the chooks, putting toys and games away, tidying bedrooms.... The list is endless!!</i></p>	<p><b>*Other Option...</b></p> <p><i>May vary from week-to-week.</i></p>	<p><b>*AT SCHOOL THIS WEEK....</b></p> <p><i>Essential information from your child's teacher for what's happening specifically in class over the next week. This is a great way for you to keep in touch with what's going on at school.</i></p>

Tasks outlined in the “Reading, “Spelling/Vocab” and “Maths” cells represent the minimum homework that students are expected to complete each week. Successful completion of tasks in these cells will earn students 2 Gotcha’s per cell.

Tasks outlined in the remaining cells represent optional homework tasks that students may complete each week. While they are optional, students will always be encouraged to complete these as they cover a wider range of Learning Areas and other non-school activities. Successful completion of these tasks will earn students 1 Gotcha per cell.

The activity outlined in each cell may be accompanied by additional information that will be included in students’ homework book/folder. Once again, this will vary according to each class and/or each student’s individual ability level.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Parent/Carers</b>
<p>Teachers can help students establish a routine of regular, independent home-learning by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring the school Homework Policy is implemented consistently across all year levels</li> <li>• setting home-learning tasks on a regular basis but within a flexible time-frame</li> <li>• clearly communicating the purpose, expectations and benefits of all home-learning tasks</li> <li>• checking homework regularly and providing positive recognition of the efforts of students</li> <li>• providing timely and appropriate feedback about home-learning tasks</li> <li>• selecting tasks that are varied, challenging and directly related to class work</li> <li>• selecting tasks that are purposeful and appropriate to students' learning needs</li> <li>• explicitly teaching strategies to develop organisational and time-management skills and providing opportunities for practice through home-learning activities</li> <li>• discussing with parents and caregivers any issues concerning their child's home learning tasks and suggesting strategies to assist with home learning requirements</li> <li>• providing assistance when difficulties arise</li> <li>• supporting students to access technology during school if required for homework tasks</li> <li>• Keep school improvement agenda front-and-centre when planning homework</li> </ul>	<p>Students can take responsibility for their own learning by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being aware of the school's expectations and guidelines for home learning</li> <li>• discussing with their parents/carers expectations around home learning tasks</li> <li>• accepting responsibility for the completion of tasks within set time frames</li> <li>• following up on feedback provided by teachers</li> <li>• seeking assistance when difficulties arise</li> <li>• organising their time to manage the various activities they engage in.</li> </ul>	<p>Parents and caregivers can help their children by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• giving them assistance where required to complete tasks</li> <li>• encouraging them to organise their time and learn time management skills</li> <li>• encouraging them to take responsibility for their learning</li> <li>• helping them to balance the amount of time spent completing home learning tasks, watching television, playing computer games, playing sport and engaging in other recreational activities</li> <li>• communicating with their child's teacher to discuss any concerns about the nature of home learning tasks or their child's approach to the learning</li> <li>• taking an active interest in what their children are learning, and if possible engaging in their own learning journey to "get up to speed" with what their children are learning.</li> </ul>