

Cootamundra Public School Home Learning Policy

Rationale

Cootamundra Public School supports the provision of home learning for students. This policy has been developed after extensive consultation with parents, staff and students. The formulation of this policy is guided by current educational research and is underpinned by the idea that effective home learning can support the development of learning skills.

What was previously referred to as homework at Cootamundra Public School, the new title 'home learning' has been chosen to reflect the values set out by our learning community. At Cootamundra Public school, home learning will be relevant, timely and support concepts and skills being developed in class.

Homework is valuable as it provides an opportunity for students to be responsible for their own learning, and encourages them to reach and maintain goals. It assists them to develop organisation and time management skills, self-discipline and skills in using out of school resources. It is an opportunity for parents to keep in touch and support what their child is doing in school. It will also reinforce and help consolidate the knowledge and skills learnt at school.

Policy Statement

This policy provides for a consistent and clear approach to homework from kindergarten to year 6. Our learning community will understand the expectations and requirements of home learning at Cootamundra Public School.

Home Learning Principles

Our policy is guided by the following principles;

Quality

Research indicates that student learning may be enhanced if home learning is:

- appropriate for each student's age and ability
- relevant to each student's needs

- purposeful and designed to meet specific learning goals
- varied and challenging, but achievable
- built on knowledge, skills and understanding developed in class
- clearly stated and requirements made explicit during class time
- supported by teacher strategies for students having difficulties with home learning.

Home learning tasks will be assigned by teachers with a specific, explicit learning purpose. On completion, teachers will acknowledge student effort and provide feedback related to student learning. Staff will be cognisant of current research on the efficacy of home learning in improving academic performance in the primary setting.

Manageability

The quantity of home learning tasks needs to be manageable so that teachers can ensure quality, and can provide feedback to students on completion. Home learning that is manageable for students will:

- be age appropriate
- consider students' outside of school hours commitments, such as sport, cultural activities, tuition, part-time employment and home responsibilities
- take into account students' access to resources and technology beyond school
- be clearly communicated to students
- provide some flexibility and options to allow for different student circumstances. This includes parents having the right to request additional home learning tasks or excuse their child from completing their home learning as required.

Communication

An effective home learning policy requires clear communication between teachers, students, parents and caregivers.

The school's Home learning Policy will be made available to the school community, particularly at the time of enrolment.

Parents/caregivers of students experiencing difficulties completing home learning tasks will be provided with adequate opportunities to discuss these concerns with the teacher, and that guidance and assistance will be provided.

Implementation

Age-specific considerations - Primary schools

While there is little conclusive evidence of the learning benefits of home learning in infants and primary schools, quality home learning in these stages may help students to develop effective study habits and broaden their understandings and skills across the curriculum.

Homework for Kindergarten-Year 2

In general, students will be introduced to home learning in Kindergarten. Students may be given books to read at home, practice sight words and revise number facts as appropriate.

In Years 1 and 2 home learning will be set. Students might be asked to read and write, learn words for spelling and complete some mathematical activities.

Homework for Years 3-6

Home learning in Years 3-6 may be varied and students may be expected to work more independently. Students could be encouraged to read and practise mathematical concepts learnt at school. Other home learning may also be set across areas of the curriculum.

Time Guidelines

While variations will occur depending on the tasks set, as a general rule the following time guidelines should be adequate for students to complete homework tasks.

- Early Stage 1 – Approximately 10 minutes each day
- Stage 1 – Approximately 10 – 15 minutes each day
- Stage 2 – Approximately 15 - 30 minutes each day
- Stage 3 – Should not exceed 30 minutes each day

Responsibilities

Principal and executive:

- Develop a Home learning Policy, in consultation with their school community
- Communicate the Home learning Policy to staff students, parents/caregivers
- Monitor and support teachers in the implementation of the Home learning Policy
- Ensure that home learning is consistent with the school's learning goals
- Support the need for balance between home learning and the many other commitments in students' lives

- Provide mechanisms for teachers and parents/caregivers to communicate about home learning
- Recognise that some parents/caregivers may not agree with the school policy on home learning. This may necessitate the development of alternative strategies.

Teachers:

- Have an awareness of and implement tasks in line with the school's Home learning Policy
- Communicate the purpose, benefits and expectations of home learning to students and parents/caregivers
- Acknowledge student effort in completing home learning and provide timely and relevant feedback on achievement
- Ensure resources and materials are easily accessible for students
- Support students having difficulties with home learning
- Discuss with students and parents/caregivers any developing issues regarding a student's home learning
- Ensure students have adequate background knowledge or skills to complete set tasks effectively
- Discuss home learning practices with colleagues to ensure consistency across the school.

Students:

- Completing their home learning tasks and submitting it within the timeframe unless otherwise excused from a teacher or parent
- Seeking assistance from teachers and parents or caregivers when difficulties arise

Parents:

- Encourage and support the students in the completion of home learning
- Communicate with teachers or the principal if questions arise
- Sign off on their child's home learning tasks once completed.

Public Speaking

Throughout the year, students will be involved in speech writing activities for public speaking. In most instances, students will prepare speeches in class as part of a regular curriculum. In the event that public speaking / speech writing tasks are set for home learning, the teacher has the following responsibilities:

- That the student has been adequately prepared in the structure and format of speech writing in order to complete the task at home
- No more than two speech tasks per year are prepared at home.