Statement of intent

Homework provides students with opportunities to consolidate their classroom learning, pattern behaviour for lifelong learning beyond the classroom 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 pursuits and employment where appropriate.

Homework that enhances student learning:
- is purposeful and relevant to students needs
- is appropriate to the phase of learning (early, middle and senior)
- is appropriate to the capability of the student
- develops the student's independence as a learner
- is varied, challenging and clearly related to class work
- allows for student commitment to recreational, employment, family and cultural activities.

Using varied and challenging homework appropriate to students’ learning needs
Homework can engage students in independent learning to complement work undertaken in class through:
- revision and critical reflection to consolidate learning (practising 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, items, information).

Responsibilities

**Principals:**
- Develop a school homework policy, in consultation with their school community, particularly the Parents and Citizens’ Association.
- Distribute the school homework policy to staff, students, and parents and caregivers, particularly at the time of student enrolment.
- Ensure the homework policy is effectively implemented throughout the school.
- Include an up-to-date school homework policy as part of their annual school reporting.

**Teachers:**
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.
- explicitly teaching strategies to develop organisational 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:**
Students can take responsibility for their own learning by:
- being aware of the school’s homework policy
- discussing with their parents or caregivers homework expectations
- accepting responsibility for the completion of homework tasks within set time frames
- following up on comments made by teachers
- 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.

The role of parents and caregivers with homework
Through their Parents and Citizens’ Association, parents can have a key role in the development of a school’s homework policy.
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
• helping them to complete tasks by discussing key questions or directing them to resources
• encouraging them to organise their time and take responsibility for their learning
• encouraging them to read and to take an interest in and discuss current local, national and international events
• 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.

Considering students’ other commitments when setting homework
In determining homework, it is important to acknowledge that students may be engaging in many different activities outside of school. These include a range of physical activities and sports, recreational and cultural pursuits. Older students may also have part-time employment. Some students have responsibilities as caregivers. Students may also be travelling for long lengths of time each day in order to get to and from school.

Homework appropriate to particular phases of learning
The following is to operate as a guide in determining the amount of set homework that students might be expected to undertake. It is of course open to parents to consult with a student’s teacher about additional materials or practice exercises with which parents can assist their children at home.
In the Early Phase of Learning (Prep to Year 3) many activities at home or in play can assist children to develop literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills.
Homework tasks may include:
- daily reading to, with, and by parents/caregivers or other family members
- linking concepts with familiar activities such as shopping, preparation of food, local environment and family outings
- conversations about what is happening at school
- preparation for oral presentations
- opportunities to write for meaningful purposes.
In the Prep Year, students will be asked to read or be read to and to revise sounds learnt that week. Number study should be investigated within the home environment.
In Years 1, 2 and 3, set homework could be up to but generally not more than 1 hour per week.
In the Middle Phase (Year 4 to Year 9) some homework can be completed daily or over a weekly or fortnightly period and may:
- include daily independent reading
- be coordinated across different subject areas
- include extension of class work, projects and research.
Homework in Year 4 and Year 5 could be up to but generally not more than 2-3 hours per week.
Homework in Year 6 and Year 7 could be up to but generally not more than 3-4 hours per week.
At ROLLESTON STATE SCHOOL:
We have devised a weekly homework program based on parents and children’s needs. It covers the core areas of Reading, Sight words, spelling and maths facts on a daily basis. It is designed with flexibility in mind so that parents can complete homework orally in the car on the way to and from the bus/school so that children and parents have the socialisation/recreation time they need each day in order to balance their life. Parents/ students may complete written work if they wish and additional homework will be set on request from students/parents.

Board Games – Research indicates that children should play board games for 1 hour/week. The benefit from playing board games stretches across the domains of personal, social, and academic achievement. The playing of board games helps children to develop and improve memory skills, concentration, patience, resilience, co-operation, social interaction and oral language skills, as well as being fun. We have allowed for the playing of Board games within our weekly framework.

Please see the attached Homework Sheet.
Homework Policy Supplement

Homework and how you can help
How you can help

The following pages contain ideas and hints which may help you to support your child with instruction at home. Please note that education is not a ‘one size fits all’ system and that these ideas and hints may not work for your child. If you need additional support, please talk to the teaching staff at the school.
How to help with Spelling

- Build his or her self-confidence. Praise the effort they make, even if the result isn’t perfect. Prevent the development of self-image as a poor speller (Don’t say things like: Your mother was always a terrible speller, you must be too)

- Understand that teachers don’t always insist on correct spelling in writing a first draft. Usually, the focus is on developing ideas or organising information and spelling comes second. If your child is writing a story, fix the ideas first, then look at the spelling second.

- Show that you care about spelling. Ask questions in everyday situations like “Who knows how to spell __________ while you are at the shops, or driving.

- Try strategies like checking the spelling by writing it out. If it doesn’t look right, it usually isn’t. Check spelling with a dictionary, but be careful of tricky words or confusing meanings.

- Remember that sounding out doesn’t work for every word. Silent letters in words like ‘know’ and ‘thumb’ can be killers.

- Encourage reading. Improvement in spelling has been shown through focus on reading. Don’t just read books. “What does that sign say?” while driving can be just as effective.

- When practising spelling words from a list, or learning new words; the default strategy is look-say-cover-write-check.

- Don’t discount your own creativity. Writing words in the dirt with a stick can be just as effective as writing them in a book.
Some Spelling Rules

1. Consonants: b c d f g h j k l m n p q r s t v
   w x y z Vowels: a e i o u

2. If a word has a CVC ending (consonant-vowel-consonant) double the last letter before adding ‘ing’, ‘ed’, ‘er’ or ‘y’.

3. If a word ends in ‘e’, take off the ‘e’ before adding ‘ing’, ‘ed’, ‘er’ or ‘y’.

4. If a word ends in a consonant plus ‘y’, change the ‘y’ into ‘i’ and add ‘es’, ‘ed’, ‘er’, or ‘est’.

5. If a word ends in a vowel plus ‘y’, just add ‘s’, ‘ed’, or ‘er’.

6. Add ‘ing’ to any word ending in ‘y’.

7. You can add ‘s’ to most words.

8. Add ‘es’ to words ending in ‘ss’ ‘x’ ‘ch’ and ‘sh’.

9. If a word ends in a consonant plus ‘y’, change the ‘y’ into ‘i’ and add ‘es’.

10. Change ‘f’ into ‘v’ and add ‘es’.

11. If a word ends in a vowel plus ‘y’, just add ‘s’.

12. Add ‘s’ or ‘es’ to words ending in ‘o’.

13. Write ‘i’ before ‘e’ except after ‘c’ when the ‘ie’ rhymes with ‘bee’.
How to help with Reading

- Do not **force** your child to read. This will be as effective as forcing them to do a chore, which will lead them to not enjoy reading and they will not become independent readers.

- Before reading, have a look at the cover of the book with your child. Ask what the pictures / title might tell you about the book.

- During reading, make sure your child can read with a level of fluency (speed). Generally the books sent home will be easier than those being read at school so that reading isn’t overly difficult.
  
  o For correct reading:
    
    - Praise when a sentence is read correctly.
    - Praise when your child corrects their own mistakes
  
  o For problems reading
    
    - Give your child a chance to solve the problem themselves (about 5 seconds is heaps)
  
  o If the mistake does not make sense:
    
    - Prompt with clues about the way the word looks (ask about a part that is wrong)
    - If the child says nothing, get them to read onto the end of the sentence or ask them to go back to the start of the sentence again.
  
  o If the word is not correct after two attempts, say “the word is ___”

- After reading, talk about what was read. Ask some questions like: What happened when ____ did ____? Why do you think ____ did ____? The idea is to get your child to think about the book and recall what has been read. This is to develop comprehension skills.
How to help with Mathematics

- Know that mathematics is everywhere. It is taught in levels of abstraction, from very ‘real’ to very ‘abstract’. Writing things like algorithms out on paper is the most ‘abstract’ and the least likely to make sense to early learners of Mathematics. Do all you can to develop a sense of number, size, length, weight, volume, area, mass, and time in ‘real’ situations and slowly move towards the abstract.

- Remember the influence you have on your child’s attitude to Mathematics. Saying things like ‘No-one in this family is much good at Maths’ or ‘Don’t worry, girls are better at English’ can create barriers to learning.

- Involve your child in real life mathematics – measuring, weighing, counting money, playing games with scores, calculating time travelled or distance to go

- Use solid objects – buttons, sticks or string when helping to work out mathematical problems.

- If you’re unsure of a method used by the teacher in the classroom – ask how it is done there to avoid confusion.

Mathematical Language Generally used for the Operations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addition ( + )</th>
<th>Subtraction ( - )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and, more, extra, together with, put with, altogether, sum of, plus, add, found, came in, bought, baked, and</td>
<td>take, goes, less, go away, not as many, fly away, get picked, ate, lost, gave, spent, how many more, different, more, not as many, subtract</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multiplication ( x )</th>
<th>Division ( ÷ )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lots of, bags of, groups of, rows of, sets of, groups of, bunches of, by, times</td>
<td>how many, groups, divide, quotient, share, give out, split.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to help with Writing

- Let them see you write – letters, shopping lists, short messages, etc.
- Encourage everyone in the family to write – examples as above. This is a similar strategy to eating fruit; the more people in the household who eat fruit, the more likely you are to encourage someone to start eating fruit.
- Display writing in the home – reminders, lists of things to do, messages of congratulation, post-cards. Have a kitchen noticeboard or similar which is written on.
- Give presents to do with writing – journals, pencils, paper and erasers.
- Be an interested listener and reader of writing. Five second glances and comments like ‘That looks good darling’ aren’t enough. Really read what they have written, or get them to read what they have written out loud. You could read it out loud with enthusiasm. Ask questions about what they have written.
- Praise writing done at school. Pay more attention to what is being written about that the spelling and punctuation. Try very hard to read a whole passage your child has written without correcting spelling. After discussing what is written, worry about punctuation and spelling in the 2nd draft.