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**Mackay North Primary
State School**

HOMework POLICY

RATIONALE

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 and cultural pursuits.

Homework that enhances student learning:

- is purposeful and relevant to student's needs
- is appropriate to the stage of learning
- is appropriate to the ability of the student
- is varied, challenging and clearly related to class work
- allows for student commitment to recreational, 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 to consolidate learning
- applying knowledge and skills in new contexts
- pursuing knowledge individually and imaginatively
- preparing for future classroom learning; that is, collecting relevant materials, items and information.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

In making homework successful for all students all parties have an important part to play:

Teachers

Teachers can help students establish a routine of regular, independent study by:

- setting homework regularly
- clearly communicating the purpose, benefits and expectations of all homework
- checking homework regularly and providing timely and useful feedback
- using homework that is varied, challenging and directly related to class work and appropriate to students' learning needs
- 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:

- 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.

Parents and caregivers

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 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 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 concerns about the nature of homework and their children's approach to the homework.

NEW guidelines for Queensland state schools about levels of student homework emphasise a need for balance between family life and consolidating classroom learning. There is an emphasis on helping students establish a positive routine of regular, independent study, without going overboard. Homework is only one part of a child's lifestyle and it's important for them to have time to take part in activities with parents and friends and to develop interests in other areas. The key is balance and while homework is important for students, so too are the other healthy activities that young people need to undertake. The suggested levels of homework provide a useful guide for parents and teachers, however, it is important to recognise that students complete homework tasks at different rates so these levels are only a guide,

For the lower school students it is important that parents get involved by reading books to them and encouraging them in a range of activities. For the upper school parents can help them balance the amount of time spent completing homework, watching television, playing sport and doing part-time work.

Good communication between teachers, students and parents is also very important to ensure students reach their full potential and homework does not become a burden to all.

Prescribed levels of homework for different age groups	
Prep Year	Generally students will not be set homework
Years 1, 2, 3	Could be up to (but generally not more than) an hour each week
Years 4 and 5	Could be up to (but generally not more than) 2 –3 hours each week
Years 6 and 7	Could be up to (but generally not more than) 3 –4 hours each week
Years 8 and 9	Could be up to (but not more than) five hours each week
Years 10, 11 and 12	Will vary according to the young person 's learning needs and individual programs of learning.

PROCEDURES

At North Mackay State School each year level has set down what they believe to be appropriate levels of homework.

Year 1 - Most year 1 homework will centre on reading and the reading program. Initially students will complete phonics (sounds) book work for the first half of term 1. After that students will be working on a home reader program. This is to assist them in becoming fluent readers. Each student will have home readers which are suited to their current reading level. Other small simple tasks will be given to students to complete in the homework book during the course of the week.

Year 2 - For the entire year students will be working on a home reader program, each week from Monday to Thursday. This is to assist them in becoming fluent readers. Each student will have home readers which are suited to their current reading level. Students will also have a spelling and maths activity sheet that is to be completed across Monday to Thursday.

Year 3 - Students will have 15 minutes reading time per night on week days. There will also be approximately one hour of additional homework per week which will reflect current classroom tasks. This will be checked and marked at the end of the week.

Year 4 - Students will have 30 minutes per night. This will include 10 minutes of reading and 20 minutes to work on a weekly homework sheet which will include English and Maths tasks that reflect current classroom work.

Year 5 - Students by Year 5 are expected to be independent readers and therefore are encouraged to read a wide variety of texts, including newspapers, magazines, fiction and non-fiction books. Student will also have set work to complete in Spelling Matters and Maths Plus student workbooks. It is expected that this will take approximately 30 minutes per night.

Year 6 - Students will have 30 minutes per night. This will include 10 minutes of reading and 20 minutes to work on a weekly homework sheet which will include English and Maths tasks that reflect current classroom work.

Year 7 - Students will have 30 minutes per night. This will include spelling, tables, reading and other activities. Students will also need to complete additional research/report work throughout the work at different times throughout the year.