Preamble

Homework helps students by complementing and reinforcing classroom learning, fostering good lifelong learning and study habits, and providing an opportunity for students to be responsible for their own learning.

- Students benefit from completing homework regularly. Homework helps them develop organisational and time-management skills, self discipline, skills in using out-of-school resources and personal responsibility for learning.

- The student planner provides a means of regular communication between parents and the school and students are expected to use it to record homework specifics.

- Failure by students to complete homework on a regular basis will be followed up with parents.

- In the Junior Years (Years 7 to 9), homework:
  - should include daily independent reading for at least 15 minutes
  - should be coordinated across teachers to avoid unreasonable workloads for students
  - may include extension of class work, projects and assignments, essays and research.

- This will generally range from 3 – 5 hours per week.

In the Later Years of Schooling (Years 10 to 12), homework will generally increase, and require from 1–3 hours per week night, with up to 6 hours on weekends during peak VCE periods. At this level students generally should be independent learners. Parents should be clear about the school’s expectations for homestudy, and should discuss issues and concerns with their children and the school.
Care should be taken to ensure that undue pressure is not placed on students at this level, and that a balance is maintained between the demands of study, family, employment, sporting and recreational pastimes. This can generally be achieved through good organisation and planning, and builds on the effective study habits developed in primary school.

**Types of homework**

Homework should:

- be appropriate to the student's skill level and age
- be interesting, challenging and, where appropriate, open ended
- be balanced with a range of recreational, family and cultural activities
- be purposeful, meaningful and relevant to the curriculum
- be assessed by teachers with feedback and support provided.

Types of homework that meet these requirements include:

- **Practice exercises** — providing students with the opportunities to apply new knowledge, or to review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, such as:
  - completing consolidation exercises for Mathematics – memorisation of tables
  - practising spelling words
  - practising words or phrases learnt in a Language Other Than English
  - reading for pleasure
  - writing essays and other creative tasks
  - practising and playing musical instruments
  - practising physical education skills.

- **Preparatory homework** — providing opportunities for students to gain background information so they are better prepared for future lessons, such as:
  - reading background material for History
  - reading English texts for class discussion
  - researching topics for class work
  - collecting newspaper articles
  - revising information about a current topic.
Extension assignments — encouraging students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively, such as:

- writing a book review
- making or designing an art work
- completing Science investigation exercises
- researching local news
- finding material on the Internet
- monitoring advertising in a newspaper.

Expectations

Parents and caregivers can help their children by:

- encouraging them to take increasing responsibility for their learning and organisation;
- observing and acknowledging their success and asking how their home and class work is progressing;
- attending school events, displays or productions in which their children are involved;
- encouraging them to set aside a regular daily session to read and complete homework;
- setting an example by reading themselves;
- contacting the relevant teacher to discuss any problems their children are having with homework;
- helping them to complete homework by discussing key questions or directing them to resources. Usually it is better to encourage children to complete homework themselves;
- helping them to balance the amount of time spent completing homework, watching television, playing computer games and engaging in other leisure or recreational activities;
- checking whether homework has been set, ensuring they keep their planner up to date and signing the planner weekly;
- reading texts set by teachers. Discussing their child’s response to the texts and asking to see work they complete in relation to these texts, and
- discussing homework in their first language, where English is not the main language spoken at home, and linking it to their previous experiences.
Teachers will help their students by:

- setting regular homework to help students establish a home study routine;
- setting varied, challenging and meaningful tasks related to class work that are appropriate to the students’ learning needs;
- giving students enough time to complete homework, taking into account home obligations and extracurricular activities;
- assessing homework and providing timely (usually within one timetable cycle) and practical feedback and support;
- making effective use of the planner as a homework diary by ensuring that it is signed by teachers and parents each week;
- coordinating the allocation of homework by different teachers;
- helping students develop the organisational and time-management skills needed for them to be responsible for their own learning;
- ensuring that students have good information skills;
- ensuring that parents and caregivers are aware of the school’s homework policy, and
- developing strategies to support parents to become active partners in homework.