

Gladesville Public School

Home Learning Guidelines

Updated 2019



Gladesville Public School aims to prioritise the wellbeing of our students and families by recognising that students participate in a range of activities and experiences outside of school hours. These home learning guidelines have been developed in consultation with parents, students and teachers. By taking current research into consideration, we ensure that home learning activities and procedures are manageable, relevant and meaningful for all families.

While the Homework (Home Learning) Guidelines are compulsory by the Department of Education, the setting of homework and any indicative time allocations across year levels are not. Families have a choice to complete any set tasks. Students at Gladesville Public School will neither be rewarded nor disadvantaged for choosing to, or not to, complete home learning tasks. All students are encouraged to engage in home reading to support literacy development and a love of literature.

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that:

- Teachers provide consistent home learning procedures across the school which enable them to select meaningful tasks to support in-class learning and to prioritise time to provide high quality teaching and learning activities.
- Students are provided with meaningful home learning activities which are relevant to the work being completed in class, appropriate for each individual's academic level and provide time to participate in chosen out of school activities.
- Parents and caregivers are informed of the school guidelines and are provided with a summary of current research.

Responsibilities

To ensure successful implementation of these guidelines, the whole school community has a shared responsibility.

- Teachers are to provide meaningful activities that support in-class learning and are appropriate to a student's academic level. Clear instructions for task completion will be communicated and timely feedback provided. Teachers are to ensure that students who do not have access to technology at home, or who require additional assistance, are not disadvantaged and are provided time at school to access technology or support.
- Students are encouraged to complete the set home learning tasks provided by class teachers. Students should request clarification or support when needed.
- Parents/caregivers are encouraged to support their child/children in completing home learning tasks through actively supervising, assisting, engaging with and checking completed work. Parents/caregivers should communicate with the class teacher when support or clarification is needed.
- The school will provide a list of recommended resources for parents who wish for their child/children to engage in additional home learning activities. These resources are in addition to the set home learning tasks and will need to be completed and marked by students and parents.

Guidelines for Home Learning at Gladesville Public School

Whole School

- It is strongly recommended that all students participate in home reading, including participation in the Premier's Reading Challenge. Students should engage in independent reading, reading to someone and being read to.
- Each grade will provide regular overviews of content being learnt in class for parent reference.

Kindergarten, Years 1 & 2

Daily Reading: Quality home reading may include home readers or books from the Premier's Reading Challenge

- Kindergarten: minimum of 5 minutes
- Years 1 & 2: minimum of 10 minutes
- Practice of 'sight words'
- Optional: students have access to Reading Eggs and Reading Eggspress online program

Matific (optional):

- Activities to be set weekly or fortnightly to consolidate concepts taught in class

Public Speaking

- Preparation of in class talk topics: teachers to provide a schedule of topics and marking criteria

Years 3-6

Daily Reading: Quality home reading may include home readers or books from the Premier's Reading Challenge

- Years 3 & 4: minimum of 15 minutes
- Years 5 & 6: minimum of 20 minutes
- Possible set pre-reading of in class content to build vocabulary
- Optional: students have access to Reading Eggs and Reading Eggspress online program

Matific (optional):

- Activities to be set weekly or fortnightly to consolidate concepts taught in class

Public Speaking

- Preparation of assessable speaking tasks: teachers to provide a schedule of topics and marking criteria
- Includes the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition

Project

- Years 3 & 4: One project per semester relating to in-class teaching and learning
- Years 5 & 6: One project per term relating to in-class teaching and learning

Research and Best Practice Related to Home Learning

Gladesville Public School, in collaboration with our parent community, has continued to stay informed through current research with eminent leaders in education. The following gives an overview of the findings to support a shift in priorities within homework guidelines at Gladesville Public School.

Key trends in research and Gladesville Public School's Commitment:

- **Research clearly supports the importance of regular reading, especially in the early years.**
Gladesville Public School will continue to prioritise reading within our home learning practices.
- **Homework must be purposeful and relevant to student needs and should not jeopardise the right of students to enjoy a balanced lifestyle (Dixon, 2007).**
Gladesville Public School will continue to prioritise the wellbeing of our students and families to encourage creativity and flexibility and prioritise purposeful and targeted tasks.
- **Whilst responsibility and time-management were often cited as reasons to set homework, most students, especially in the younger years, are not developmentally ready to fully comprehend the requirements.**
Gladesville Public School will continue to prioritise developing time-management within daily classroom teaching and learning, particularly with senior students who will have the option to also complete home projects.

The following research is reflected within the Parliament of Victoria's Education and Training Committee's inquiry into the approaches to homework in Victorian Schools (August 2014).

- Education Lecturer Alfie Kohn in his article 'Rethinking Homework' unequivocally states, "...there is absolutely no evidence of any academic benefit from assigning homework in elementary or middle school. For younger students, in fact, there isn't even a *correlation* between whether children do homework (or how much they do) and any meaningful measure of achievement" (Kohn, 2007).
- NSW Public School Homework Policy: Research Scan (2012) indicates that more time on homework in the early years is found to relate to lower achievement.
- John Buell PhD observes, "For a practice as solidly entrenched as homework, the scholarly case on its behalf is surprisingly weak and even contradictory." (2004, p.9) This is supported by a range of respected studies (Blazer, 2009); (Dixon, 2007; Queensland Government Department of Education and the Arts, 2004).
- Teaching and Learning leader, Annie Facchinatti's article 'The Dog ate my Homework', states that "The potential for unstructured playtime with siblings and parents is far more likely to develop social skills, tighter family bonds and qualities desirable in the modern world such as flexibility and creativity than filling in a worksheet ever will (2016, p.15).
- Dr Sue Thomson, a Senior Research Fellow with the Australian Council for Educational Research notes that countries with high-achieving students, Japan, Denmark and the Czech Republic, assign little homework, and it appears the more homework a nation's teachers give, the poorer that country's results on achievement tests (Thomson, quoted in Dixon, 2007).