



Home Learning Policy

Policy Statement

This policy provides clear guidelines about home-learning expectations at MacKillop Catholic College to our community, staff and students.

Rationale

MacKillop Catholic College aims to inspire a life-long love of learning through 21st Century pedagogy, supported by quality research and educational best-practice. Both the New South Wales Department of Educationⁱ and the Victorian Government'sⁱⁱ comprehensive review of homework has indicated that homework at the primary school level has little impact on academic performance but may play an important transitional role in preparing students for secondary school and beyond. Studies have shown that there is a measurable, but small benefit for students in lower secondary. For senior secondary students, homework was shown to have a substantial positive effectⁱⁱⁱ.

A notable exception to this is home reading, which research consistently finds contributes significantly to student academic success, particularly across aspects of literacy^{iv}, and at all stages of students' experience.

Consequently, the home learning requirements at MacKillop Catholic College will ebb and flow, following the rhythm of classroom learning and increasing over time as students mature.

Responsibilities

In order for the successful implementation of this policy, the recommended responsibilities of our school community are as follows:

- ☑ Teachers are guided by school 'home learning guidelines' to promote consistency across the school. Additionally, it is the responsibility of teachers to work with students and parents to meet individual needs and provide additional support through homework as required.
- ☑ Students undertake the home learning tasks assigned by their teacher to consolidate learning from the classroom. This includes daily reading in line with policy expectations.
- ☑ Parents support their children in their understanding that home learning set by the teacher is highly recommended as it consolidates learning from the classroom. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved with their child's home learning. This should include supporting daily reading in line with policy expectations.

What is home learning?

Home learning is any time spent on assigned and unassigned learning activities outside the classroom. It is an important part of every child's development from before their entry to formal schooling in Prep, through to their graduation in Year 12 and provides opportunities for students to develop independent study habits as they grow and mature into lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

Designed to complement classroom learning, home learning is consolidatory, benefitting students by complementing classroom learning, fostering good study habits and providing an opportunity for students to be responsible for their own learning. Furthermore, it strengthens the partnership between school and home, allowing parents to take an active role in their child's learning.

Importantly, **reading is the highest priority activity**. All students should be reading every evening. This can be a combination of reading out loud (even for older students, this assists with fluency), reading silently and being read to (modelled reading). To create an interesting reading environment, it is ideal to have a good supply of reading materials — newspapers, magazines, books, and catalogues. It doesn't matter if they're owned or borrowed, new or used. What is important is that reading materials are a natural part of your home and everyday life.

Purpose of home learning:

- help students grow and become independent learners, particularly through literacy development (becoming independent readers)
- involve parents in the educational process by providing an insight into their child's learning experiences
- over time, encourage and develop self-discipline, self-organisation and study habits
- reinforce, broaden and extend the school curriculum

Types of home learning:

- Reading – this is the most important activity that every student should engage in each night; particularly reading for enjoyment
- Revision of key concepts to cement understanding
- Completing work that was unfinished during the day
- Further examples of work covered in class, designed to reinforce what has been learned
- Reading articles or other texts, viewing short clips or listening to podcasts to prepare for the following lesson (flipped-learning) or to extend an interest from the day's learning
- A specific, self-contained project or task which is based on previous class work
- An extended task which may span several weeks
- Revising and preparing for tests and exams

Home Learning Activities - examples

P-2

Must Do

- Reading for personal enjoyment
- Shared reading with parent/s or older family member/s,
- Reading for enjoyment with younger family members
- Quiet own choice reading
- Word lists
- Basic counting and number facts

Can Do

- Educational Apps such as Khan Academy Kids, Reading Eggs, Maths Online, Endless Learning Academy
- Creative tasks which may include drawing or practising a musical instrument
- Practising physical education skills, such as balance, climbing, swimming, and throwing
- Listening to child specific podcasts, such as 'Imagine This' via ABC Listen

Year 3/4

Must Do

- Reading for personal enjoyment
- Shared reading with parents or older family member
- Reading for enjoyment with younger family members
- Quiet own choice reading
- Written work relating to gaining reading and number skills
- Basic number facts and tables

Can Do

- Games that promote literacy and numeracy skills, such as UNO, Connect 4, Story Cubes, or Scrabble
- Creative tasks which may include practising a musical instrument or illustrating
- Practising physical education skills
- Listening to child specific podcasts, such as 'Short and Curly' and 'Fierce Girls' via ABC Listen
- Educational Apps such as Khan Academy Kids, WordScapes

Year 5/6

Must Do

- Reading for personal enjoyment
- Shared reading with parents or older family member or quiet own choice reading
- Reading for enjoyment with younger family members
- Written work relating to gaining reading and number skills
- Number facts and tables
- Projects, assignments and research

Can Do

- Extension of class work
- Creative tasks which may include practising a musical instrument or illustrating
- Practising physical education skills
- Games that promote literacy and numeracy skills, such as UNO, Connect 4, Story Cubes, or Scrabble

- Listening to child specific podcasts, such as 'Short and Curly', 'Off Track' and 'Fierce Girls' via ABC Listen and 'Wow in the World' and audio books
- Educational Apps such as Khan Academy Kids, WordScapes, DuoLingo

Year 7-9

Must Do

- Reading for personal enjoyment
- Revision of key concepts and skills across subject areas
- Shared reading with parents of older family member or quiet own choice reading
- Reading for enjoyment with younger family members
- Reading and annotation of set texts
- Viewing or listening to set material
- Projects, assignments and research

Can Do

- Creative tasks which may include practising a musical instrument or illustrating
- Practising physical education skills
- Listening to podcasts such as 'How stuff works', 'The past and the curious', 'Stuff You should know', 'Stuff You Missed in History Class', 'Hardcore History' or 'Naked Science'
- TED Talks

Year 10-12

Must Do

- Reading for personal enjoyment
- Revision of key concepts and skills across subject areas
- Practising specific skills, such as essay writing, short response items, etc
- Shared reading with parents of older family member or quiet own choice reading
- Reading and annotation of set texts
- Viewing or listening to set material
- Projects, assignments and research

Can Do

- Creative tasks which may include practising a musical instrument or illustrating
- Practising physical education skills
- Listening to podcasts such as 'How stuff works', 'The past and the curious', 'Stuff You should know', 'Stuff You Missed in History Class', 'Hardcore History', 'Naked Science', 'In our time', 'The Garrett', 'The Party Room', 'Emperors of Rome'
- TED Talks

Policy Date: 2019

Next review: 2022

ⁱ Department of Education (2012). Homework Policy: Research Scan. Retrieved 13/3/2019, from https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/curriculum/schools/homework/Hwk_Res%20scan.pdf

ⁱⁱ Parliament of Victoria Education and Training Committee (2014) 'Inquiry into the approaches to homework in Victorian Schools'. Retrieved 13/3/2019 from

https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/file_uploads/ETC_Homework_Inquiry_final_report_PWkrPPVH.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ Harris, Cooper. (1989). 'Synthesis of research on homework: Grade level has a dramatic influence on homework's effectiveness' 1(47) Educational Leadership 85, 88.

^{iv} Merga, M. (2017). 'Research shows the importance of parents reading with children – even after children can read' published in The Conversation. Retrieved 13/3/2019 from <https://theconversation.com/research-shows-the-importance-of-parents-reading-with-children-even-after-children-can-read-82756>