



At Blackwood Primary School we value and encourage the relationship between the home and school learning environments and recognise the role of parents in their child's education.

Our *Home Learning Policy* reflects our beliefs and current research that homework is most beneficial when it is flexible, relevant and responds to the needs of students. As teachers we recognise the vast array of extra-curricular and home activities as part of student learning. At Blackwood Primary School we use a Home Learning Grid to "recognise the wide range of after school activities, encourage positive family interactions and allow relaxed time for children to pursue their own learning." (Lillico, 2004)

General Principles

Home Learning provides opportunities to:

- Make connections between home and school
- Build an understanding that learning extends beyond the classroom and school
- Builds an opportunity for ownership of learning and sharing learning with home
- Reinforce, extend and consolidate basic skills and knowledge
- Develop and extend the core learning skills of inquiry and independent study
- Further develop skills of organisation and responsibility
- Establish a routine for home learning

We also recognise the crucial role the home plays in the success of our students learning to read and to practise skills and information. For this reason we expect that every child reads at home every day and that all children, regardless of age or reading ability, read aloud to an adult at least once a week. This is important in maintaining expression and fluency. As well, students in the primary years are expected to practise numeracy skills, once they are introduced at school.

Reception - Year 2

Teachers in the earliest years will give a "Home Learning Grid" to parents at the beginning of the year. This grid will have the following activities included:

- Learning spelling words
- Practising the structured readers sent home by the teacher
- Learning sight words and practising sounds
- Numeracy Skills

The role the home plays in the success of beginning readers and mathematicians is crucial.

Other activities which may be included in the "Home Learning Grid" acknowledge that all activities at home or in play can assist children to develop a wide range of knowledge and skills including literacy, numeracy and problem solving. Language and number concepts can be introduced and consolidated in many family activities, including:

- Sharing of books and stories
- Reading
- Shopping
- Preparation of food
- Listening to stories, learning songs and nursery rhymes
- Conversations about what is happening at school
- Interactive video and computer programs
- Library borrowing
- Family outings
- Collecting items

Years 3 – 7

In these years we aim to develop a more regular routine of Home Learning to foster the development of effective learning habits. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their own learning and sharing their learning with home.

Home Learning Grids will be given out regularly and tasks generated by the class teacher will include:

- Reading and Literacy Skills
- Numeracy Skills

Other activities may include and can be generated by teachers, students and families:

- Well-Being Activities
- Spelling Activities
- Research
- Interviewing
- Discussing topics
- Oral presentation preparation
- Journal reflection writing
- ICT skills
- Watching online videos/ reading online articles/presentations
- Completion of school learning
- Practising and reinforcing skills, such as tables.
- Researching areas of interest
- Musical studies
- Participation in organised activities
- Drawing, creating and making
- Spending more time on a task and exploring it in more depth.
- Asking or discussing learning with parents

Communication

All expectations regarding Home Learning will be outlined, either by the teacher through a class newsletter/website or at Acquaintance Night.

Diaries and communication books are used at Blackwood Primary School to develop student’s organisation and time management skills and to improve home/school communication.

Home Learning is set regularly and students are expected to complete the tasks set. Home Learning Grids encourage students to learn to manage time and commitments. However, on the occasions that overnight home learning is set students are expected to negotiate with the teacher if commitments mean that they cannot honour these deadlines.

Home Learning is a shared responsibility, with teachers, parents and students all having a role to play.

The role of teachers:

- To set home learning tasks which are clear and appropriate to the year level
- To set home learning tasks which relate to the needs and abilities of the child as well as to the general classroom program
- To communicate expectations about home learning to parents as well as students
- To provide feedback to students and parents about their home learning tasks

The role of parents:

- To communicate with the teacher if the child is unable to complete the home learning tasks
- To contact the teacher if they are unsure what home learning is required
- To contact the teacher if the child is experiencing trouble completing the home learning tasks in general, or if they believe the child is spending too much or too little time on their home learning tasks

The role of students

- To keep a record the home learning tasks using the home learning grid
- To ensure that necessary materials are taken home.
- To complete the home learning tasks to the best of their ability and request help from the teacher or family if needed

Example of a Home Learning Grid and Tasks

<p><i>Read a Variety of Texts</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Books from home ▫ Books from school ▫ Books from the library ▫ Magazines/newspapers ▫ Read to somebody ▫ Be read to 	<p><i>Be Active</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Play outside ▫ Create new game ▫ Play games/sports learnt at school with your family ▫ Ride a bike/scooter ▫ Go for a walk (with supervision) 	<p><i>Help with Housework</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Set the table for dinner ▫ Help with cooking ▫ Suck/Vacuum ▫ Help wash/dry dishes ▫ Help with shopping ▫ Help with washing/laundry
<p><i>Teach Somebody</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Things learnt at school ▫ Things you have researched 	<p><i>Be Creative</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Draw a picture ▫ Use pencils, crayons, paint ▫ Write a song/poem/story ▫ Create a collage ▫ Create sculptures: playdough, paper rolls, toothpicks, paddle pop sticks etc. 	<p><i>Practice Class Spelling Words</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Look/cover/write/check ▫ Quiz others ▫ Be quizzed ▫ Revise words from previous weeks
<p><i>Practice Relaxation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Lay quietly with your eyes closed; relax all parts of your body/ clear thoughts out of your head/ visualise being in your favourite place/ slow your breathing down ▫ Complete a quiet activity e.g. silent reading 	<p><i>Use Technology</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Use a computer to research new information ▫ Discover a new computer game ▫ Practice other skills (e.g. maths) using a computer ▫ Email a friend ▫ Type a story 	<p><i>Play with an Adult Family Member</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Play a board game ▫ Use the computer ▫ Design and play a board game ▫ Play outside ▫ Play a sport