BELMONT PUBLIC SCHOOL

Homework Policy

RATIONALE

Parents recognise and value homework as a way of seeing and contributing to their children’s education and as a means of measuring their achievements and progress. The school recognises and values the equality of experiences and assistance provided for its students through their parents’ support and involvement in homework. The school aims to capitalise on all its families’ activities and interests by ensuring that there is a link between home and school. This is beneficial to all children.

It is informed by:

- Parent, student and staff input
- The NSW Department of Education Homework Policy
- The Belmont PS Parents and Citizens Association

This policy document was revised by staff and P&C at Belmont PS in 2015.
GUIDELINES
The concept of homework for students of all ages is supported by the Department of Education.

Our guidelines for homework at Belmont Public School are as follows:

- each class teacher will have the freedom to follow her/his own system of homework
- homework should be a purposeful learning experience
- homework must be actually completed by the child by her/himself with parent or caregiver help where necessary
- homework will not always be written work
- homework should be regularly supervised by parents or caregivers
- homework may be used to develop and extend special talents and encourage and support students with learning difficulties
- any difficulties which involve understanding or completing homework should be discussed by students and/or parents or caregivers with the class teacher.

TYPES OF HOMEWORK

Practice exercises
These provide students with the opportunities to apply new knowledge or review and reinforce newly acquired skills, including:
- consolidation exercises e.g. maths, including memorisation of tables
- practising for mastery e.g. spelling
- revising information about a current topic
- practising words or phrases learnt in another language other than English
- writing

Preparatory homework
Providing opportunities for students to gain background information on a unit of study so that they are better prepared for future lessons, including:
- background reading
- reading e.g. English text for class discussion
- researching topics for a class unit of work
- collecting items e.g. geometric shapes.

Extension assignment
Encouraging students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively, including
- writing e.g. a book review
- making or designing something e.g. an art work, science task
- researching e.g. history, local news
- information and retrieval skills, e.g. using a home computer to find material on the internet.

Wherever possible homework should recognise the place of technology in today’s world and the benefits of using technology such as home computers, e-mail and the Internet for organising and accessing information. Students who do not have access to such technology at home should not be disadvantaged.
EXPECTATIONS

Parents and caregivers can help by:

- taking an active interest in homework
- ensuring that there is time set aside for homework
- encouraging and supporting students to complete homework
- providing, where possible, a dedicated place and desk for homework and study
- encouraging their children to read and take an active interest in current events
- assisting teachers to monitor homework by signing completed work if requested and being aware of the amount of homework set
- communicating with teachers any concerns about the nature of the homework and their children’s approach to the homework
- alerting the school to any domestic or extracurricular activities that may need to be taken into consideration when homework is being set or corrected.
- informing the school if they do not wish their child to complete homework assignments

Teachers can help by:

- explaining to students and their parents or caregivers the purpose and benefits of homework
- ensuring students and parents or caregivers are aware of the school’s homework policy
- communicating in writing to parents or caregivers about the homework routine and have a communication network available
- providing quality homework activities related to class work
- not setting new work which requires direct instruction
- setting a suitable amount of relevant homework which is appropriate to the ability of each student
- informing parents if class work needs to be completed in addition to the routine homework tasks
- ensuring that students are aware of what is expected of them and how their work will be assessed
- giving students sufficient time to complete their homework, taking into account as far as possible, competing home obligations and extracurricular activities and homework set by other teachers
- marking homework promptly and appropriately, maintaining homework records and providing feedback to students and parents or caregivers. Most homework can be grouped marked in class time
- contacting parents if homework habits change
- alerting parents or caregivers of any developing problems concerning their children’s homework and suggesting strategies that they can use to assist their children with their homework.
Students can help by:

- being aware of the importance of homework
- being aware of their school’s homework policy
- completing homework within the given time frame
- alerting parents or caregivers to homework expectations
- seeking assistance from teachers and parent or caregivers when difficulties arise
- showing their homework to their parents or caregivers
- ensuring homework is of a high standard
- organising their time to ensure that sufficient time is given to quality homework within set deadlines. (This is more relevant for Stage 2 and 3 students).
- communicating with the support teachers to ascertain if any homework tasks were assigned

TIME GUIDELINES

The amount of homework set should be manageable within the time guidelines stated below. Students, in consultation with their parents or caregiver, should allocate enough time to complete the homework. It is important that students of all ages have opportunities for free time, leisure and physical activities outside of school.

As a general guide the time set for homework 4 nights per week, including independent reading recorded in their Home Reading Record book.

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT WORK

- Assignments are distributed to students with explicit instructions and marking rubric.
- Research assignments or projects need clear written instructions, including due dates, length for completion and level of parent assistance acceptable.
- Research assignments should be structured to ensure that, as far as possible, the work can be done by the students and that the product has been substantially completed by the students herself / himself.
- If parent help is appropriate this should be stated on the assignment sheet. The students should indicate the amount and type of help they received from their parents or caregiver.
- Research assignments should be designed and written to suit the range of students in the year level.
- Optional or self motivated extension assignments may be left more open ended. Requirements may be negotiated with the teacher.
- Specific web site addresses, names of books and other resources required for the assignment should be supplied by the teacher.