

# Home Learning Policy



## Rationale

This policy provides a framework to support students, parents and caregivers, and teachers with the implementation and management of home learning.

Home Learning helps students by complementing classroom learning, fostering good study habits, organisation skills and encouraging independence through providing an opportunity for students to be responsible for their own learning. The school is responsible for developing and publishing a Home Learning policy consistent with the guidelines from the Department of Education.

The term 'Home Learning' refers to a wide range of learning experiences undertaken by children and their families outside school hours. The school recognises that many students travel long distances each day and that a balanced range of educational, recreational, family and cultural activities are vitally important to their health and wellbeing.

## Policy statement

This policy seeks to promote the potential benefits of home learning within a flexible, but consistent and clear framework. This policy aims to promote balance and curiosity in the lives of the students and to foster positive, lifelong learning and study habits.

At Palinyewah Public School, education is seen as a partnership between students, teachers and parents. The development of an effective home learning routine is an integral component in the preparation of students for future learning.

## Implementation

Home Learning at Palinyewah Public School will consist of varied activities depending upon the Year level of the student. The time allocated to Home Learning will also vary, and the school recognises that this will be influenced by a number of factors, such as the time available within the family's normal routines and schedule.

## Home Reading Program

***Daily home reading is the cornerstone and focus of our approach to home learning. The benefits of regular reading are widely shown through numerous research findings.***

All students will be involved in the Home Reading Program. Each student will be able to record the titles of books read using the Dogeared app or a printed diary. All students are strongly encouraged to read each day, including weekends and school holidays.

All students should read aloud to an adult for at least part of the reading time. Each student will be provided with a reader carry bag to assist in transporting and protecting readers. It is highly recommended that families set aside a specific area where the reader and folder is stored to prevent loss.

The recommended **minimum** time allocation for each home reading session is:-

- Kindergarten – 5-10 minutes
- Years 1 and 2 – 10-15 minutes
- Years 3 and 4 – 15-20 minutes
- Years 5 and 6 – 20-30 minutes

Students are asked to bring their Home Reading folder to school every day. This helps develop responsibility by setting a regular pattern for returning items to school.

Teachers regularly check the Dogeared app to monitor student progress. The app is also used as a communication tool between the teachers and students.

Students who achieve 100 nights of reading in a school year will be able to select a book for donation to the library. Any student who achieves 200 nights or more by Term 4 Week 9 each year will be awarded a book prize at Presentation Night.

### **Infants Reading**

Infants students will be able to access a variety of levelled readers for reading each night. These readers will not be books the students have read previously at school.

As an unfamiliar text, the student may require some assistance during their first reading.

Suggestions to assist the student include:-

- Predicting what the story will be about from the cover picture or book blurb
- Providing prompts such as:-
  - Does the picture help?
  - Read to the end of the sentence – what would make sense?
  - What does it start with?
  - What sounds are in the word? Remember - not all words can be sounded out
- Reread the whole sentence to help maintain meaning
- After reading, discuss the story:-
  - Summarise what happened – what were the main ideas or events for the beginning, middle and end of the text?
  - Who were the characters?
  - The student's opinion of the text – what did they like / dislike?

At various times, Kindergarten - Year 2 students will have a set of sight words. Regular reading of these words is highly encouraged.

### **Primary Reading**

Primary students will also be able to select from a collection of levelled readers. They may also select material which is appropriate to their reading level from the school library, their own personal collection of books or other sources that may be available e.g. online material, newspapers, and magazines. The students are encouraged to challenge themselves in their reading rather than only select material which is easy to read. New reading material may be selected each day, while older students may read a longer text over an extended period of time.

Being an effective reader is not just being able to read the words fluently. Comprehending the written word gives purpose to reading. To help your child become a more effective reader, these strategies may be helpful.

- Predicting – use information from the text, images or your own experience to try and predict what might happen next, how characters might react or what the outcome will be.

- Questioning – ask and answer questions about the text to help children understand the meaning of the text.
- Monitoring – if something doesn't make sense as you read it, stop, reread and think or discuss what you've read to understand the meaning.
- Visualising – it can help to paint a picture in our head of things being described or explained in a text – it helps bring the text to life.
- Making connections – compare what you are reading to:
  - something in your own life
  - another text you have read or watched
  - something happening in the world.
- Summarising – notice the most important things in the text and use your own words to describe what you have read.

## Spelling and Phonics

All students in Years 1-6 will bring home a copy of their spelling focus words for the week. Of the printed list of thirty words, ten previously unknown words will form the basis of their learning. These words are highlighted on the list. Practising these words at home is highly encouraged. This can be done in a number of ways such as:-

- writing
- spelling out loud
- typing
- breaking into syllables
- using in sentences.

It is recommended that parents check the spelling of written words to ensure their child is not copying a word incorrectly.

The other words on the list provide the students with an opportunity to further develop their vocabulary knowledge through reading and understanding the words. The students are encouraged to read through the list of thirty words and discuss the meaning of any unknown or unfamiliar words. Regularly reading these words assists the student in developing their sight word vocabulary and fluency. This can form part of the student's reading time.

## Years 5 and 6

Home Learning will be more formalised for students in Years 5 and 6 as part of their preparation for High School. Apart from reading and spelling mentioned above, the students will have a variety of other activities including writing, maths, research and English.

## Additional Activities

From time to time, additional activities will be sent home by the teachers. This may include a research assignment in which the student is expected to plan and manage their time to complete the assignment by the due date. Parents, caregivers and students are encouraged to discuss any issues such tasks may present with the teacher.

## Learning at Home

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to assist their children with learning at home. A formal, prescriptive and assessed program is not required for home learning to be beneficial.

Parents and caregivers are able to incorporate additional home learning strategies to enhance student learning. These could include, but are not limited to:-

- Typing on a computer
- Using spelling words in sentences or stories
- Saying the alphabet
- Playing “I spy ...”
- Writing a diary recording family activities or concepts learned through the school day
- Researching topics of interest
- Discussing a television show or movie the student has watched, providing opportunities for the student to show understanding of the story as well as an opinion
- Revising mathematical facts:-
  - mental additions and subtractions
  - times tables
  - skip counting by a specific number e.g. 2
- Using maths skills in practical ways:-
  - counting money
  - telling the time – digital, analogue and 24 hour
  - measuring for cooking
  - sorting or counting objects
- Utilising the student’s subscriptions for online programs to hone and practise skills. The school has purchased subscriptions for:-
  - Matific <https://www.matific.com/>
  - Reading Eggs <https://www.readingeggs.com.au/>
  - Typing Tournament <https://www.typingtournament.com/>
  - Math Facts Pro <https://mathfactspro.com/>
- Listening to a story being read to them
- Playing board games or card games together
- Undertaking musical or sporting activities

### Monitoring, evaluation and review

This policy was formulated in consultation with the parents of the school community through survey and discussion.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to discuss any problems with home learning tasks or requirements with the teachers.

Feedback in regard to this policy is welcome at any time from parents and caregivers.

The policy will be reviewed each year in consultation with staff and the P&C.

Policy to be reviewed: Term 4 2021

## 10 Benefits of Reading

### **1. Children who read often and widely get better at it.**

After all, practice makes perfect in almost everything humans do, and reading is no different.

### **2. Reading exercises our brain.**

Reading is a much more complex task for the human brain rather than watching TV, for example. Reading strengthens brains connections and builds NEW connections.

### **3. Reading improves concentration.**

Children have to sit still and quietly so that they can focus on the story when they are reading. If children read often, they will develop the skill to do this for longer.

### **4. Reading teaches children about the world around them.**

Through reading a variety of books children learn about people, places, and events outside of their own experience.

### **5. Reading improves vocabulary and language skills.**

Children learn new words as they read. Subconsciously, they absorb information on how to structure sentences and how to use words and other language features effectively in their writing and speaking.

### **6. Reading develops a child's imagination.**

As we read our brains translate the descriptions we read of people, places and things into pictures. While we are engaged in a story we are also imagining how a character is feeling. Young children then bring this knowledge into their everyday play.

### **7. Reading helps children to develop empathy.**

As children develop they begin to imagine how they would feel in that situation.

### **8. Reading is fun.**

A book or an e-reader doesn't take up much space and is light to carry, so you take it anywhere so you can never be bored if you have a book in your bag.

### **9. Reading is a great way to spend time together.**

Reading together on the lounge, bedtime stories and visiting the library are just some ways of spending time together.

### **10. Children who read achieve better in school.**

Reading promotes achievement in all subjects, not just English. Children who are good readers tend to achieve better across the curriculum.

## **Resources used to compile this document**

NSW Department of Education Homework Policy

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/homework-policy>

NSW Department of Education Homework Tips for Primary School

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/practical-help-for-parents-and-carers/help-with-homework/years-3-to-6>

Homework Policies from other schools

### Research

<http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Instruction/What-research-says-about-the-value-of-homework-At-a-glance/What-research-says-about-the-value-of-homework-Research-review.html>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/documents/about/research/readtoyoungchild.pdf>

<https://www.melbournechildpsychology.com.au/blog/the-many-benefits-of-reading-aloud-to-your-kids/>

10 Benefits of Reading <http://www.cameverlands.org.uk/10-benefits-of-reading/>