Appendix F – Homework Guidelines

The completion of homework is a critical aspect of learning for all students. This is due to the natural ways in which children learn. Almost all children require the information that they have learnt during the day to be repeated and reinforced at a later time. This assists in the process of passing information into long term memory.

The homework process helps students with a series of life skills. These include; the development of self-discipline, independent learning skills, the ability to work within a time frame, organisation and memory.

At The King David School homework is a partnership between students, parents and teachers. Students must take a serious approach to their own learning, teachers must carefully design homework to reinforce their curriculum; and parents need to facilitate the learning of life skills outlined above. If this partnership functions properly, students will not view homework as a burden, teachers will not be constantly chasing incomplete work and parents will not see homework as a constant battle.

The following guidelines have been developed by the teachers of The King David School. They represent the teachers’ advice to students and parents and set the direction of homework for the whole school community. They are expressed in terms of issues and they define the responsibilities of students, parents and teachers for each issue.

The Development of ‘Homework Behaviour’ in Kindergarten and Prep

Student

◗ Children should relax and have time to relax and play in the evening and spend time with their families.

◗ The focus needs to be on the development of responsibility for belongings and remembering things for school.

Parent(s)

◗ A regular reading time most nights (at least 4 times per week).

◗ Parents should encourage this routine with subtle reminders.

◗ Ideally this should be a calm, quiet ritual.

Teachers

◗ Teachers should devote time and effort to train students in the use of timetables and calendars.

◗ Provision of systems to aid in remembering.

◗ The emphasis is on personal responsibility for own property and actions.

The Amount of Time Spent on Homework

These allocations are indicators of the amount of time that students should spend on homework. They should be adjusted before exams and in periods of extra work. The aim is to work consistently throughout the year.
Student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prep and Year 1</th>
<th>10 – 15 minutes</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
<th>40 – 60 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>10 – 15 minutes</td>
<td>Year 7 and 8</td>
<td>60 – 90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>15 – 20 minutes</td>
<td>Year 9 and 10</td>
<td>105 – 120 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>20 – 30 minutes</td>
<td>Year 11 and 12</td>
<td>165 – 180 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>30 – 40 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- When work exceeds 60 minutes breaks need to be taken.
- In lower primary no more than three tasks per night.
- In upper primary no more than four tasks per night.
- In lower secondary no more than 20 minutes per subject per night as a general rule.

Parent(s)

- Develop an awareness of how much time their child is actually spending on homework.
- Focus on whether the time is effectively used.
- Discourage students who wish to work well beyond the suggested times.
- Encourage students who always finish early to read or practise a skill.

Teachers

- No weekend work is to be given for primary school students other than in exceptional circumstances.
- There needs to be communication between teachers about the due dates of projects, test dates, etc. via a year planner in each classroom or home room. Class and homeroom teachers show co-ordinate such planning.
- There should be consistency about the amount of homework to be achieved through year level meetings.
- Students’ abilities must be taken into account and set homework is to be set by time, as opposed to completion of a task.
- Define the expectation for homework – the amount and the time you expect it to take.

Homework Itself

Student

When there is no specific homework tasks you should be revising, preparing for the next section of a subject or working on projects.

Parent(s)

- Encourage your child to look over his/her homework before packing up.
- Encourage responsibility and independent working.

Teachers

- Homework should be consolidation and/or extension tasks based on what was learnt in class.
- It can be the practising of a previously learnt skill.
- In primary children should be given very specific tasks or asked to practise skill (eg. spelling words, times table).
- The focus should be on enrichment and application.
Parents and Homework

Student
- The responsibility for completion and submission of homework lies with the student.
- Younger children may prefer to be around parents when doing homework, older children should be working alone.

Parent(s)
- Ensure the provision of a well lit, well ventilated, quiet place to work (ie. no TV, radio, etc.).
- Parents should only oversee homework, not insist that it be completed or demand that it is done well.
- Parents should show interest in child’s homework and projects.
- Most important rule: Don’t do your child’s homework. This inhibits them from learning.
- Ask about homework but don’t fight about it – a fight means that you are imposing your discipline rather than encouraging the student’s self-discipline and it clouds your relationship with your child.
- Parents should act as a resource to students.

Teachers
- Teachers need to notify parents when homework is incomplete or poorly done.
- Teachers need to support parents by checking if homework is done and then implementing appropriate strategies or consequences for incomplete homework.

Homework that is Incomplete or Not Attempted

Student
- It is the student’s responsibility to complete all homework.
- If homework is incomplete it is the student’s responsibility to complete it as soon as possible.
- Students need to be honest with teachers and parents about incomplete homework.

Parent(s)
- Parents should be made aware of any homework via the diary, particularly in the primary and lower secondary levels.
- If there is a legitimate reason why homework has not been done then provide your child with a note; however you need to assess the legitimacy of your child’s excuse.
- Emphasise to your child the problem of allowing homework to build-up over time.

Teachers
- If homework is not done the first step is to ask why it is not done.
- Lunch time is considered an inappropriate time to complete homework as both staff and students need a break. On rare occasions lunchtimes may have to be used.
- Students are allowed a second chance to complete homework.
- If homework has been omitted 3 times in a specified period, the student is to be referred to Study Hall for a designated number of days (Magid Campus only).
Other Aspects of Homework

Student

- Students are encouraged to develop organisational skills. This means; remembering all homework that is to be completed and establishing homework routines.
- Use of the school diary is critical and ensures that all homework tasks are remembered.

Parent(s)

- Focus should be on what the child has completed rather than on incomplete work.
- Children should be rewarded for imposing self discipline and working productively.
- Notice when your child is doing homework and provide positive reinforcement.

Teachers

- Students are to be given regular, reasonable, purposeful homework.
- Homework should not be a punishment.
- Students and parents should be educated about the changing expectations as students move from one year level to the next.

Study Hall

This is a supervised after-school session for students having difficulty with completing homework. Students may elect to voluntarily attend Study Hall for assistance or in some cases students may be referred by a teacher or parent.

If your child is having difficulty with homework, contact your class/home room teacher.