

THE KING'S SCHOOL WEST RAND



HOMework POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The King's School West Rand wishes to develop its students holistically – spiritually, emotionally, intellectually and socially and to equip them with the necessary skills to function independently with confidence and a clear sense of God's purpose in their lives.

Homework is a vehicle towards attaining these goals and is particularly essential as it meets certain objectives which cannot be achieved in the otherwise normal educational programme of the school.

The homework policy is founded on the following basic tenets of The King's School West Rand Educational Confession and submits to relevant legislation as described in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No 108 of 1996), the National Education Policy Act 9Act No 27 of 1996) and the South African Schools Act (Act No 84 of 1996).

- As a school, we aspire to instil in our children a desire for Christian wisdom, to enable them to conquer the challenges of life. (Mission Statement)
- As a school, we aspire to further develop the whole child in body, soul and mind. (Mission Statement)
- As a school, we aspire to equip our children from pre-school to Grade 12 with knowledge, skills, and Christian values and attitudes. (Mission Statement)
- We shall provide a nurturing environment to facilitate the children's recognition of their need for salvation. (Statement of Philosophy of Education)
- We believe in the value of family. (Statement of Philosophy of Education)
- We desire for parents to be actively involved in their children's education experiences. (Statement of Philosophy of Education)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

When assigning homework, the teacher must consider the following guiding principles:

1. The school acknowledges the importance of the family and respects the need for the parents to spend time with their children outside of homework or school activities. Teachers should exercise appropriate wisdom in the amount of homework assigned as well as the spread of the homework load over specified periods of time to prevent excessive requirements on some days followed by other days when homework assignments require negligible time to complete.
2. Homework is essential for consolidation and practice of the learning outcomes taught in the class. It is thus important for teachers to maintain a rigorous discipline in the assigning and checking of homework to ensure that The King's School West Rand achieves recognised national and international standards of excellence in education.
3. The school desires to implement age-appropriate increments in homework requirements from one grade to the next with the dual aim of:
 - a. Equipping students with a sound work ethic; and
 - b. Preparing students for their Senior Certificate schooling year with a sense of confidence.
4. Parents should be encouraged to monitor and facilitate completion of homework by their children, but should equally be exhorted to refrain from completing children's homework themselves or providing assistance in tasks which children are expected to action on their own. Such assistance might result in an unfair assessment and be counter-productive to the process of learning. Parents may be required to complete a letter stating the amount that they assisted.
5. Homework provides opportunities for students to learn study skills and time management. Therefore due consideration should be given to guiding students on how to plan a work/task schedule, to avoid procrastination and delay and to set intermediate goals.
6. Not all students have access to the same resources. Thus homework assignments should be designed in a way to allow all students an equal opportunity to meet the expected outcomes.
7. Homework allows for differentiated teaching and learning, as well as enrichment which is not always possible in the classroom. Teachers should plan homework tasks with careful forethought to contribute to students' self-discipline, independence, confidence and concentration.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

1. **Teachers will ensure that homework is meaningful by:**

- Giving parents information about the types of homework to be set in each grade at the first parent meeting each year and by giving guidelines on how to tackle it
- Ensuring that pupils have their homework signed by a parent or guardian
- Following up on incomplete homework and giving feedback on homework performance
- Setting homework tasks which are not dependent on inaccessible resources
- Explaining to children in advance all that is involved in projects or homework tasks
- Giving clear due dates
- Including interactive homework tasks involving all family members

2. **Allocation of projects**

- Projects/assignments are defined as homework tasks that involve multiple skills/ instructions and are assigned over an extended period of several days or weeks.
- Instructions must be given in writing and the assessment rubric must be supplied at the outset.
- In the case of major projects, manageable intermediate goals can be suggested/ required for students. E.g.
 - Week 1 - Discussion of brief
 - Week 2 - Planning
 - Week 3 - Accumulate resources
 - Week 4 - Research
 - Week 5 - Draft
 - Week 6 - Final submission

Intermediate goals can be incorporated into the assessment rubric and monitored and acknowledged over the full length of time.

3. **Parent Involvement**

It is vitally important that teachers engage with parents on the issue of homework, particularly in the Foundation- and Intermediate phase grades. Regular meetings or correspondence are encouraged and may be very beneficial to communicate with parents about how to best help children learn.

It is important that parents understand what role teachers expect them to play. What one parent views as helping out, a teacher might perceive as interference and cheating. Teachers can then give practical ideas on how to ensure that homework is completed also giving individual guidance and help. It is thus necessary for the teacher to be sure their expectations are realistic, given parents' skills and schedules. If children have a valid reason for not doing their homework, a letter from the parent must be sent with the reason.

4. **Supplies**

The school strives to ensure that no child is disadvantaged because of lack of access to supplies.

- Where supplies need to be purchased, a weekend must be allowed between the issue date and due date of a project.
- Internet access may be booked by students for use in the afternoons.
- Where necessary, financial assistance can be arranged for needy individuals.

The student is held responsible at all times for ensuring that they have the necessary supplies.

5. **Absenteeism**

Students are responsible for catching up work missed as a result of being absent from class. However homework issued within the time while a student is absent, is given 2 days grace for submission to allow time for notification and completion. Students are **not** excused from homework issued **prior** to a period of absence and must submit such work on the day of their return to school.

6. **Assessment Schedules**

- There should not be more than 2 summative assessments scheduled/due on one day.
- There should not be more than 3 summative assessments scheduled per week.
- Adequate preparation and study time must be allowed for summative testing and test dates should be notified to students with as much lead time as possible – min of 1 week.
- In the Intermediate Phase summative assessments need to be recorded on the assessment board in the staff room at the beginning of the term.
- In the High School, summative tasks must be scheduled in advance on the Term Assessment Schedule. (See template below)

LEARNING AREA	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6	WEEK 7	WEEK 8	WEEK 9	WEEK 10
English (First Language)										
Afrikaans (Additional Language)										
Mathematics/Maths Literacy										
Life Orientation										
Accounting										
Physical Science										
Business Studies										
History										
Geography										
Visual Arts										

Spot testing is encouraged in all phases to ensure that students have an adequate grasp of the concepts being taught. No notification lead time is required and there is no limit imposed on the frequency of such testing. However, such tests are not weighted heavily or at all in terms of final assessment calculations and are formative or diagnostic in nature.

7. **Nature of homework assignments**

Teachers must invest careful forethought in their choice of homework assignments to ensure a positive learning experience.

- Homework should not be assigned as a punishment for bad behaviour.
- Homework should supplement what has been done in class and not substitute what **should have been done** in class.
- Homework should intentionally include a revision or consolidation of previous sections.

The following is a suggested guide to homework:

GR.	TYPE OF HOMEWORK RECOMMENDED	DIARY ETC.	SIGNING
R and RR	Revision of sounds	Homework sheet	
1	Reading Revision of sounds/bonds	Homework sheet	Parents

2	Reading Spelling Basic rote numeracy Completion of classwork	Homework sheet	Parents
3	Reading Spelling/spel Basic rote numeracy Completion of classwork Studying for tests	Regulation school diary	Parents
4	Reading/Lees (20 – 30 min daily) Spelling/Spel Tables and Bonds revision Completion of, and preparation for classwork Revision Studying for tests	Regulation school diary	Parents
5	Reading (20 - 30 min daily) Spelling/Spel Tables and bonds Completion of, and preparation for, classwork Completion of Project Work/Research Studying for tests	Regulation school diary	Parents
6	Reading (20 – 30 min daily) Spelling/Spel Tables and Bonds Completion of and preparation for classwork Completion of Project Work/Research Studying for tests	Regulation school diary	Parents and Children
7	Reading (20 – 30 min daily) Spelling/Spel Tables and Bonds Completion of and preparation for classwork Completion of Project Work/Research Studying for tests	Regulation school diary	Parents and Children

8. **Monitoring/checking of homework**

It is imperative that teachers check homework when it is due – failure to do so is negligent and results in students developing a negative perception of its worth.

Students may be instructed to mark the work of their peers with guidance from the teacher, but teachers should control such review by signing off in children's books.