IRONBARK RIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOL
HOMEWORK POLICY 2006

1. Purpose of the policy

This policy outlines how and why homework is to be set at Ironbark Ridge PS, including the responsibilities of teachers, students and parents in the implementation of the policy. The policy is based on current DET policy and recognised best practice for primary aged students.

2. Philosophy

Homework is most beneficial to the student when it reinforces and extends class work and consolidates basic skills and knowledge. It should be challenging and purposeful but not so demanding that it has adverse effects on the student’s motivation. Homework is most effective if parents are aware of the homework set and monitor student’s completion of homework. It is least effective when it is not related to the curriculum being covered in class, is too hard or too easy or is not monitored or supported by parents.

3. Implementation

This policy will be implemented from Term 3 2006.

4. Review

This policy will be reviewed in 2009.

5. The purpose of homework

Homework:
- Can be a valuable part of schooling;
- Allows for practising, and consolidating extending work done in class;
- Provides an opportunity for students to develop time management and planning skills;
- Develops a range of skills in identifying and using information resources;
- Establishes habits of study, concentration and self-discipline;
- Strengthens home-school links;
- Reaffirms the role of parents and caregivers as partners in education;
- Provides parents and caregivers with insight into what their children are learning and their progress through learning outcomes.

6. Responsibilities: Teachers

- Ensure that homework is related to work being done at school;
- Make parents and caregivers aware of the school’s policy on homework and their role in implementing this policy;
- Set homework that allows students to demonstrate what they are capable of and consolidate and extend (if appropriate);
- Give students sufficient time to complete their homework, taking into account, as far as reasonable, competing home obligations and extracurricular activities;
- Ensure students are aware what is expected of them and how their work will be assessed;
- Mark homework promptly and appropriately, maintain homework records and provide feedback to students and parents and caregivers when required;
- Help parents understand what homework is required and if completed work needs to be signed by them;
- Communicate with parents about areas of concern related to homework.
Students

- Organise time during the period allowed for the completion of homework;
- Complete set homework within the time frame allowed by the teacher;
- Remember to have parents sign completed homework if this is required by the teacher;
- Remember to hand in the homework;
- Discuss any difficulties that may result in homework not being completed, with the teacher;
- Ensure that homework is of a standard that reflects their ability;
- Accept that there may be consequences if set homework is not completed and handed in within then time allowed (not Early Stage 1).

Parents

- Make sure they are familiar with the school’s homework policy;
- Support the school’s homework policy and their child’s study habits;
- Contact the class teacher if difficulties arise with the difficulty of the homework or their child’s ability to complete the homework within the time allowed;
- Make the teacher aware of any family or extra curricular activities that will impact on their child’s ability to complete homework within the time allowed;
- Ensure that the child has somewhere appropriate in the home to complete homework;
- Check completed homework and sign if the teacher has indicated that this should be done.

7. Implementation

**Early Stage 1 (Kindergarten)**

It is uncommon for teachers to set homework during the first term of Early Stage 1. From Term 2, homework may include such activities as: sight words, home readers, spelling, maths activities, writing activities. Later in the year, students who are experiencing difficulties may have a home program that targets specific areas such as phonemic awareness, single sounds or sight words. If a child requires a home program, the class teacher and Support Teacher will discuss the program and its implementation with the parent. Homework may also take the form of reading books from home or the library, being read to by a parent, discussing events with parents and older siblings, collecting items which may have been requested such as photos, craft equipment.

*Homework will take about 10-15 minutes to complete per night from Term 2.*

**Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)**

Homework usually becomes more formal from the beginning of Stage 1 and will often include reading aloud to a parent for 5-10 minutes (students will be encouraged to borrow books from the library that are appropriate to their reading level, especially in Year 2). Other activities may include mathematics, spelling and using their spelling skills in writing. Mini projects may also be set by the teacher including oral presentations and public speaking. Parents are encouraged to continue nightly oral reading to the child in throughout Stage 1, as these students continue to benefit from hearing good reading models and seeing that parents value reading as an enjoyable activity.

Students experiencing difficulties with specific areas of learning may be asked to participate in a home program. If a child requires a home program, the class teacher and Support Teacher will discuss the program and its implementation with the parent.

*Homework will take about 15-20 minutes per night to complete in Stage 1.*
Stages 2 and 3 (Years 3-6)

Although as students progress they increasingly work independently on their homework, it is important that teachers and parents continue to provide guidance and assistance, particularly in the development of study skills, time management and organisation.

Homework may cover any of the Key Learning Areas with an emphasis on English and Mathematics. Research projects and the development of oral presentations, public speaking and debating, are all important elements of the Stage 2 and 3 curriculum and are legitimate tasks to be set for homework.

Students experiencing difficulties with specific areas of learning may be asked to participate in a home program. If a child requires a home program, the class teacher and Support Teacher will discuss the program and its implementation with the parent.

*Homework will take about 25-30 minutes per night to complete in Stages 2 and 3. The length of time required will depend on the type of homework set and may vary slightly from week to week as a result.*

8. Types of homework

To ensure the all-round development of the child, it is important that they have time outside school hours for social interaction and physical activity. Therefore, the amount of time spent on homework must be realistic.

The three main types of homework are:

**Practice exercises:** Providing students with the opportunity to apply knowledge or review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, including:

- Consolidation exercise eg. using spelling words in writing;
- Practising for mastery eg. sight words;
- Reading for pleasure using a text at the appropriate level for them;
- Applying mathematical knowledge to problems.

**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:

- Researching topics for a class unit of work;
- Reading a text prior to class activities;
- Collecting items eg. geometric shapes.

**Extension assignments:** encouraging students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively, including:

- Writing a response eg. a book review;
- Making or designing something eg. an art work;
- Investigating something eg. kitchen chemistry;
- Researching eg. history, local print, radio or TV news;
- Monitoring eg. advertising.

If there is no set homework, parents can:

- Read to or with their child or listen to the child read orally. To gauge if a book is too hard, a good rule of thumb is if the child makes five or more mistakes or needs to be prompted five or more times on a page, then the book is too hard.
- Talk to their child about events in their day and depending on their age, events in local, national or international media.
- Listen to music or practice a musical instrument.
- Throw or kick a ball with their child - there are strong links between physical and intellectual development.

If you are going on holidays during term time:

It is not necessary to have school work set for this period of time. While you are on holidays, talk with your children about what you are doing and seeing, include some ‘educational’ activities, read signs and information, follow a map of the journey, write a journal about their holiday and add photos, brochures, tickets and other interesting items and continue to read for pleasure and information.
9. **Homework Grid**

One format for homework that teachers may choose is to issue a homework grid (see example below). This grid has the advantage of allowing families to fit homework around family activities and commitments.