

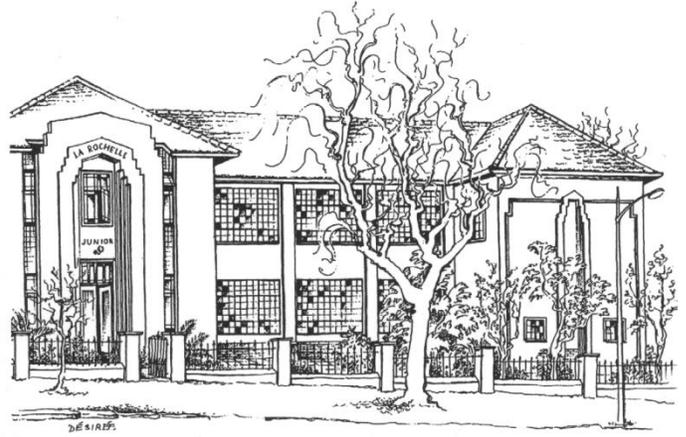
Laer Meisieskool

# La Rochelle

Girls' Primary School

## Homework policy

Revised 24 January 2017



### Introduction

Homework is part of the teaching and learning activities of schooling, and requires effective management by educators, the principal, parents and learners.

Learning at home is an essential part of good education. A good, well-managed homework programme, based on thorough, co-ordinated planning, guidance and control by all learners, helps children to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes they will need for successful lifelong learning. Homework also supports the development of independent learning skills and provides parents with an opportunity to take part in their children's education.

### Definition

Homework can be understood to be the out-of-class tasks that learners are instructed to do by the educator as an extension of classroom work and which will contribute to their learning.

### Objectives

Homework tasks:

- help to complement and reinforce classroom learning,
- foster good life-long learning and study habits,
- provide an opportunity for learners to undertake schoolwork independently and under their own conditions, increasing their personal responsibility and individual accountability,
- provide an opportunity for independent acquiring of knowledge and mastering skills,
- strengthen the link between home and school by involving parents in a meaningful way in their children's education,
- allow educators an opportunity for assessing whether they are able to apply what they have learnt to other examples, exercises and tasks, i.e. monitoring girls' progress and diagnosing learning problems,
- contribute to learners' understanding that the school holds high expectations of them.

Age- and developmentally appropriate homework tasks and parental interest and support should help to improve the learners' learning.

Homework should not prevent learners from taking part in out-of-school activities that improve their skills, interests and talents. Homework, therefore, has to be relevant and meaningful, and learners should perceive it as such.

### Types of homework

1. Practice Assignments reinforce newly acquired skills.

Examples:

- Reading with parents.
- Girls who have just learned a new method of solving a mathematical problem should be given sample problems to complete on their own.
- Finding examples in practice and further investigation of topics that were discussed in class.

2. Preparation Assignments help girls to get ready for activities that will occur in the classroom.

Examples:

- Reading of texts in preparation for the next day's class.
- Reading research-related articles.

3. Extension Assignments provide opportunities to develop and refine research skills and the ability to work independently, whilst applying previous learning.

Example:

- Long-term large-scale projects and assignments that parallel class work.

### Role and responsibilities of various stakeholders

#### *Guidelines for educators*

- The intention of homework should be to reinforce and extend classroom learning and to consolidate basic skills and knowledge, and ultimately extend to developing a routine of independent home study.
- Meaningful learning takes place when learners experience material repeatedly and through various entry points. Homework should reinforce the material learned during class and provide an opportunity to enhance understanding of the concepts taught in class that day. Educators should plan tasks that will challenge the learners to think and integrate prior knowledge and skills.
- Homework should be tailored to meet the needs of different learning styles.
- The purpose of the homework task will depend on the Learning Area and the particular grade of the learner.
- Educators should ensure that a reasonable number of age and developmentally appropriate tasks are given to the learners.
- Homework tasks should show variety over time and could be physical, creative, verbal, not just reading and writing tasks.

- Homework should always be stimulating, but not too complex, have a clear goal, be well explained, and clearly understood. Educators should ensure that learners understand the purpose and relevancy of the tasks.
- The positive effects of homework for children with special needs should be the same as those for other learners. However, homework should be differentiated, where possible to suit the individual needs, emphasising the reinforcement of skills and class lessons, rather than the integration and extension of class work.
- The completion of worksheets as homework tasks should not be encouraged.
- Homework tasks should be assessed and regular feedback should be given to the learners.
- Preparation for tests and special assignments will require extra time over and above daily homework.
- No homework is usually set the day prior to a test being written, as revision should be done by learners.
- Projects and Assignments:
  - ❖ The learners are given written instructions as to what is required for projects/assignments.
  - ❖ The learners are provided with the assessment tool before they start with the project/assignment.
  - ❖ The core of the work should be done in the classroom, and not at home.
  - ❖ Guidance and the rough draft should be done in the classroom.
  - ❖ Only the neat, final product should be done at home.
  - ❖ Educators should allow sufficient time for completion of projects. Learners should be notified of tests at least one week prior to the test date.
- Educators should be aware of homework tasks given by other educators to avoid a homework overload.
- All homework is recorded on the blackboard. Sufficient time for writing down homework should be given.
- Completion of tasks started in class does not qualify as homework.
- Educators should consider the home circumstances of the learners when planning homework tasks.
- Educators should take extra-curriculum activities into account when homework tasks are planned.
- No homework should preferably be set for the school holidays.
- Educators should alert parents of any developing problems concerning their child's homework and suggest strategies to improve the situation.

### *Guidelines for learners*

- Learners should organise their time effectively to ensure that they have sufficient time to complete their tasks effectively. Educators should provide guidance in terms of time management.
- Learners should learn to check their own work for careless mistakes and submit work which reflects careful attention to detail and quality of work.
- Learners record their homework in their diaries. Younger learners are assisted in this regard by the educator, whereas it is expected of Grade 6 and 7 learners to take full responsibility for recording their homework in their diaries.
- Learners should complete and return homework tasks by the due dates indicated on the blackboard/instruction sheets.
- Learners who are involved in co-curricular activities during class time (music) and have missed out on work, complete their class work at home.
- Learners should seek assistance from educators and parents when they experience difficulties with the homework tasks.

### Measures taken when classwork or homework is not completed/done/handed in on time

- If a learner has not kept up with the work in class it will have to be done at home in addition to the set homework.
- Learners will not be allowed to catch up on homework during class time.
- If homework has not been completed a note must be entered into the homework diary and learners must ensure that the parents sign the activity.
- If homework is not done, the incidence is recorded in the Red File. In the event of the learner not completing homework repeatedly, the educator uses her discretion as to whether the matter should be referred to the Disciplinary Committee.
- Projects/assignments handed in more than 3 days after the due date, will not be accepted. For every day that it is late, 20% of her mark achieved will be deducted, unless a valid written apology is submitted.
- Assessment tasks handed after the due date, or not handed in at all, will be not awarded a mark.

### Guidelines for parents

Parents should:

- familiarise themselves with the school's Homework Policy;
- understand the importance of homework as part of the child's schooling;
- encourage positive attitudes towards the school and homework assignments. Be supportive of the educator and the school in front of the child;
- read to and with their children as much as possible – set an example by being an avid reader yourself;

- regularly talk to their children about what they read or write, or involve them, for example in the writing of the grocery list. Insist on the correct spelling and using full sentences when answering questions in their in their mother tongue, as well as in the language of learning and teaching;
- encourage and praise the child for doing homework and for finishing tasks. Confidence is vital to learning;
- provide optimum conditions for doing homework , e.g. good physical conditions: good light and free from physical interference;
- ensure familiarity with the curriculum content, its demands and challenges, assessment and progression requirements;
- assist children to establish a homework routine, e.g. a specific time. No excuses or procrastination should be permitted;
- encourage efficiency in time use;
- make an effort to get to know the educator. Encourage the child to discuss their homework and feedback from the educators with them;
- show a keen and regular interest in children’s schooling. Help the child to obtain the necessary reference materials, whether this means providing them in the home itself or providing the necessary transportation to and from the public library;
- provide stimulation of sincere interest without nagging or extreme pressure. Be firm but reasonable ;
- raise concerns at the school about children’s progress;
- guide and assist with instructional tasks. NEVER do the homework or project work for the child, for example, if a child does not understand a mathematics problem, do not solve the problem for the child, but rather do a similar one. The child will never learn or develop and abilities, if work is not done by herself ;
- assist the educator to monitor homework by signing completed work when requested and also being aware of the amount of homework given;
- check to see that the child has done all the homework set. Be supportive, but do not correct mistakes, as the educator will then not be able to assess whether the child needs assistance or support;
- attend progress meetings and interviews regularly.
- Remember, both you and the educator want the child to achieve!

## Homework within the context of the NCS

### *Foundation phase*

Initially, learners will need assistance from parents, but they should gradually develop an independent approach as they move through the grades.

- Regular reading with parents.
- Practicing skills that were taught in class.

#### *Recommended time per day:*

- ❖ Grade 1 : 10 minutes
- ❖ Grade 2 : 20 minutes
- ❖ Grade 3 : 30 minutes

### *Intermediate phase*

- Combination of tasks focusing on practising new skills and interacting with new knowledge on an independent level.

#### *Recommended time per day:*

- ❖ Grade 4 : 40 minutes
- ❖ Grade 5 : 50 minutes
- ❖ Grade 6 : 1 hour

### *Senior phase*

- Tasks that include accessing information,
- oral and written assignments and independent study,
- preparation for a next lesson,
- application of skills, e.g. reference material or working on a project.

#### *Recommended time per day:*

- ❖ Grade 7 : 1 hour 10 minutes

Please note that these are only recommended times, it excludes preparation for formal assessments, like tests and examinations, and may vary according to the abilities of the learners.

“The benefits of doing homework properly include developing a sense of responsibility and achievement. Homework will help children to develop their self-esteem, knowing that they can complete tasks and projects, and will build their capacity for working independently, as well as managing their time well”. – Kobie Kitshoff: DCES, Curriculum Development, WCED.