



Policy Name	Homework Policy
Related Policies and Legislation	
Policy Category	Education Program
Relevant Audience	All Treetops Community
Date of Issue / Last Revision	25 October 2010 16 June 2016 – JS & JK
Date Set for Review	June 2019
Person/s Responsible for Review	Treetops Administration

Homework Policy

Purpose

This policy is to clarify the School’s approach and expectations in regards to student homework. For primary school students in a Montessori educational context and in high school, homework as a meaningful and integrated part of a student’s educational programme.

Homework Policy – Primary School

Homework, in a Montessori sense, is work that the child does at home as an extension of his or her own interests. This work should be meaningful and of high interest to the child; it should have a purpose. Homework may also include items where frequent practice is desirable such as learning sight words and number bonds etc.

In the lower years, homework can include a variety of activities, including household chores. It can help the child develop language skills, cultural awareness, make mathematics a real part of the home environment and give the child a voice in family decisions.

Every experience a child has is educational and no education system can be successful in preparing children for a place in society without parental support. Education is, in fact, a cooperative effort that begins at home and is supplemented by the school. For these reasons it is assumed and expected that parents take an active part in choosing homework, or home activities, appropriate for the child.

Homework is best, through primary years, when it consists of 'real life' activities. In addition to those activities that interest the child, homework may also consist of activities that have a great deal of meaning to the parent. Sharing that kind of activity with the child may be a way to expand the child's horizons and build a bond around that shared activity. Activities that are enjoyed together add to the child's repertoire of enjoyable activities which may serve to enrich the child's entire life.

Homework Policy – High School

At Treetops, we are focused on working with our students to develop a particular set of skills, knowledges and qualities as learners. We do this by working with underlying Montessori principles about the nature of children and of education, and by using the International Baccalaureate (IB) Learner Profile (*see Appendix at end*).

All high school students at Treetops are given and are expected to do homework. The homework they are given is a meaningful, integrated part of their education programme. It has an obvious connection to the world in which we live and the world in which our students will have to be adults. It is never assigned simply to occupy time or to keep students busy.

"Homework" refers to anything related to a student's education programme that is not done at school during class hours. It can include activities as diverse as following-on from lessons, specific skill or subject related tasks, accumulating materials for an up-coming event, rehearsals, or lesson preparation. Homework can be assigned to a whole class or to individual students, depending on the needs of students at that time.

Expectations for homework match the general expectations for year groups, and expectations for individual subjects and students within year groups. All students are expected to work to their capacity and capability. Staff, families and students work together to meet the needs of the student. Each partner – staff, family, and student – has different responsibilities, however it is an equal and collaborative relationship.

Students use a range of strategies to develop organisational and time management skills, and families are asked to support the use of different strategies until the best option for the individual student is found. Homework tools could include:

- Diaries
- Electronic calendars on tablets and phones
- Notification programmes (such as messaging and emails)
- Gantt charts
- Post-it notes and "to-do" lists
- Running records
- Homework apps

Homework has different purposes at different stages in a student’s education, and the nature of that homework will reflect the development needs and educational requirements of each stage. It is not possible to complete years 9, 10, 11 and 12 without doing homework. However, the skill of balancing out-of-school hours to include recreation, physical activity, individual interests and homework needs to be introduced much earlier so that students will get the most out of their year 9 to 12 schooling and post-high school activities. High school homework, therefore, is part of a continuum of skill development. The focus for homework in year 7 & 8 is on developing good organisational and time management habits, rather than subject content. In years 9 & 10, homework is linked to subject content with individual teachers managing homework within their subject area. By years 11 & 12, there is no distinction between in-class work and homework as students focus on completing their courses of study. The high school homework continuum is summarised below:

Treetops High School Homework Continuum

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11 and 12
Homework journal	Homework journal	Individual subject homework	Individual subject homework	Individual subject homework + course requirements from ToK, CAS and Extended Essay as relevant
In addition to in-class work	In addition to in-class work	In addition to in-class work	Integrated with in-class work	Integrated with in-class work
Content and tasks are separate from in-class work	Content and tasks are separate from in-class work	Move towards content and tasks being connected to in-class work	Content and tasks connected to in-class work	Content and tasks directly related to in-class work
Focus on development of time management and organisational skills	Focus on consolidation of time management and organisational skills	Focus on development of skills to manage own homework, then homework that is related to in-class work	Focus on consolidation of skills to manage in-class work + homework as part of integrated programme	Focus on independent management of all aspect of programme, including homework
Small, structured tasks to be completed within one week	More complicated tasks, including tasks which extend over two weeks	Different homework tasks with different deadlines	Different in-class and/or homework tasks with different deadlines	Task requirements related to course, including preparation and revision
Families to sign completion sheet	Families to sign completion sheet	Families to support transition to independent homework skills	Families support homework as part of programme	Families support student in achieving their goals, as part of their course
Journal managed by advisory teacher	Journal managed by advisory teacher	Advisory teacher supports student and family	Advisory teacher aware of and monitoring student engagement with homework	Advisory teacher aware of and monitoring student engagement with homework

APPENDIX:

Underlying Montessori principles about the nature of children and of education:

- Children are innately good.
- Children have a natural urge to explore the world and to learn.
- Each child is unique.
- Children grow and develop at different rates.
- Education focuses on the whole child: physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual.
- Education focuses on the whole personality of the individual child including the faculties of intellect, deliberation, initiative and independent thinking.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Learner Profile:

The qualities we wish our students to develop are embodied in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Learner Profile. Learners strive to be:

Inquirers They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Knowledgeable They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-takers They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.