



EAST ADELAIDE
SCHOOL

East Adelaide School Home Learning Policy

Purpose

Home Learning at East Adelaide School supports students to think deeply, explore ideas beyond the classroom, and build independence as learners. Beginning in 2026, Home Learning will be implemented across the entire school, replacing the term “homework” and reframing the purpose of learning at home.

Our approach draws on:

- **Harvard Project Zero** principles
- **Community of Inquiry (CoI)** structures
- **Learning Expedition Guiding Questions**, which anchor inquiry across year levels
- Research from **Cooper, Hattie and others** on effective home learning

Home Learning aims to build curiosity, independence, critical thinking, communication skills, and the capacity for students to engage meaningfully with complex ideas.

Rationale

Research shows that learning completed at home is most effective when:

- It is **purposeful**, age-appropriate, and consolidates classroom learning
- Students understand the **learning intention**
- Students work in consistent **routines and spaces**
- Tasks strengthen **independence**, study habits, and responsibility
- It is **achievable** without specialist resources or extensive adult intervention

At East Adelaide School:

- **Nightly reading** (or being read to) is expected for all students and sits outside time allocations.
- Home Learning is a **school–family partnership**, supporting student wellbeing, routine, and confidence.
- Tasks must be purposeful, relevant, and respectful of family commitments.



Whole-School Inquiry Framework for Home Learning (2026)

Beginning in 2026, all year levels will engage each week with a Learning Expedition Guiding Question, expressed through a whole-school structure called The Dilemma Drop.

The level of complexity, independence, and expectation will vary by age group, but the structure is consistent across the school to:

- Strengthen a shared culture of thinking
- Build school-wide oracy and reasoning practices
- Use consistent tools and routines
- Align with our Expeditions and Visible Thinking approach

THE WEEKLY HOME LEARNING CYCLE (R-6)

MONDAY – The Dilemma Drop (Guiding Question Launch)

A shared **Learning Expedition Guiding Question** is released school-wide.

This question:

- Connects to real-world issues, ethical dilemmas, and the learning expeditions
- Encourages thinking through multiple perspectives
- Anchors the week’s thinking and home learning tasks
- Includes 2–3 curated resources (videos, visuals, short texts) that are accessible and varied
- Is developmentally adjusted for Early, Primary, and Middle Years
- Aligns with Project Zero routines (e.g., See–Think–Wonder, Tug-of-War, Connect–Extend–Challenge)

Example dilemmas/framing questions:

- *Should AI tools be used to help us think, or do they stop us from thinking for ourselves?*
- *How should societies balance wellbeing and productivity?*
- *What responsibilities do individuals have to improve their community?*

TUESDAY-THURSDAY – Exploration at Home (Home Learning)

Across the school, students explore the weekly question through age-appropriate Home Learning activities.

Examples:

Early Years (R-2)

- Talking with family about the weekly question
- Drawing or writing simple responses
- Using thinking routines such as See–Think–Wonder
- Noticing feelings, fairness, or preferences

Primary Years (3-4)

- Watching the curated videos
- Reading short articles or visual texts
- Completing thinking routines
- Vocabulary and concept exploration
- Practising reasoning: “What makes you say that?”

Middle Years (5-6)

- Research and note-taking
- Analysing perspectives in media
- Preparing arguments, examples, or evidence
- Optional extensions: blog posts, resource curation, questions for dialogue

The focus is not on *finishing tasks* but on *thinking deeply and preparing for dialogue*.

FRIDAY – Dialogue Circle (Community of Inquiry)

Each class participates in a **facilitated Community of Inquiry** based on the week’s guiding question.

Students practise:

- Clarifying ideas
- Asking questions
- Reasoning with evidence
- Building on others’ ideas
- Listening actively
- Identifying bias and perspective
- Using vocabulary related to the dilemma

Observers (rotating roles) pay attention to oracy skills such as:

- Turn-taking
- Persuasive techniques
- Summarising
- Empathy in disagreement
- Use of Project Zero thinking routines
- Justification and reasoning

This practice builds a school-wide culture of thoughtful, civil discourse.

Students

- Establish a home learning routine
- Engage with the weekly guiding question
- Complete age-appropriate exploration tasks
- Bring curiosity and prepared thinking to Friday discussions
- Take responsibility for required equipment

Parents and Carers

- Support routines with time and space for home learning
- Encourage curiosity and conversation—not provide answers
- Communicate with teachers when challenges arise

Teachers

- Implement the weekly inquiry cycle
- Provide clear explanations and scaffolds
- Use consistent digital platforms to share resources
- Differentiate home learning tasks
- Facilitate Community of Inquiry dialogue circles
- Provide opportunities for feedback or reflection

Time Allocation (Home Learning, excluding reading)

- **F–2:** Up to *30 minutes* across 4 nights per week
- **Years 3–4:** Up to *45 minutes* across 4 nights per week
- **Years 5–6:** Up to *90 minutes* across 4 nights per week

Nightly reading remains *essential* across all year levels.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Students will develop:

- **Critical and Ethical Thinking** – analysing information, weighing perspectives, and reasoning clearly
- **Oracy and Communication Skills** – expressing ideas with clarity, confidence, and empathy
- **Media Literacy** – recognising credible sources and bias
- **Student Agency** – shaping discussions, contributing dilemmas, and leading inquiry
- **Civic Understanding** – engaging with issues that matter in the world

This approach blends philosophy, media literacy, Project Zero thinking routines, and Community of Inquiry dialogue to help young people not just *read* the world but *respond* to it thoughtfully.

Home Learning at East Adelaide School in 2026 positions students as thinkers, communicators, and active citizens. Through the weekly Dilemma Drop and Community of Inquiry, students develop the skills—and dispositions—needed to navigate complexity with empathy, curiosity, and conviction.