

Homework Club

Final Evaluation Report

August 2026

Fair Foundations

Executive summary

The Fair Foundations Homework Club provided free, structured after-school learning support for primary school students who may otherwise have limited access to homework assistance, educational resources and quiet learning environments. Funded by the Mazda Foundation, the program operated across four Fair Foundations Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services and two public schools in Fairfield and Liverpool.



181
unique students reached



195
one-hour sessions delivered



4.40/5
average student enjoyment



88%
of responding students would recommend



4.41/5
improvement in confidence
(parent-rated)



4.41/5
improvement in positive
relationships (parent-rated)

The evaluation found strong evidence that Homework Club was valued by students, parents and school partners and contributed to positive learning behaviours, confidence, social connection and access to educational support. Students rated their enjoyment at 4.40 out of 5, and 88% of those who answered the recommendation question said they would recommend the program to a friend. Parents rated the program's contribution to their children's confidence and positive relationships at 4.41 out of 5. Teachers described increased independence, stronger homework routines and greater willingness among students to attempt their work.

What changed

- Students developed more positive attitudes towards homework and learning, including greater willingness to ask for help and attempt work independently.
- Students benefited from a safe, supervised setting that combined academic support with positive peer interaction and healthy snacks.
- Families gained access to free academic support, particularly valuable for parents with limited English proficiency, limited confidence supporting schoolwork, or work commitments that reduced the time available for homework assistance.
- School partnerships strengthened communication between families, schools and Fair Foundations and created a practical pathway to reach students with the greatest need.
- Objective literacy testing showed statistically significant growth: among 26 matched students, average reading age increased by just over five months across a 7-10 week delivery period. This is a strong result for a modest one-hour-per-week intervention and provides compelling evidence that Homework Club contributed to meaningful literacy gains.

The evaluation used multiple sources—student and parent surveys, teacher interviews, educator reflections, attendance records and a validated reading assessment. Findings are promising and consistent across stakeholder groups.

“I’ve definitely seen some kids become a bit more independent... some of the kids just go in, sit down and actually give it a go.”

— Ashcroft Public School teacher

1. Program purpose and design

Responding to educational disadvantage

Homework Club was established in response to the educational and socioeconomic barriers experienced by many children in Fairfield and Liverpool. These include low English proficiency, limited academic support at home and digital exclusion. The program primarily supported students in Years 1–6, many from migrant and refugee backgrounds and families experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage.

The program was designed to increase homework completion; improve student confidence, engagement with learning, school participation, study habits and independent learning; increase access to social and educational resources; and support wellbeing and positive peer connections. Its longer-term aims were to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes and contribute to reducing educational disadvantage.

Intended program outcomes

The evaluation assessed progress against the following outcomes established at the beginning of the funded program:

Learning participation	Increased homework completion; improved engagement with learning and school participation.
Confidence and independence	Improved student confidence, study habits and independent learning.
Skills and resources	Improved literacy and numeracy; increased access to educational and social resources.
Wellbeing and equity	Positive peer connections and wellbeing; contribution to reducing long-term educational disadvantage.

Delivery model

Term	Focus	Delivery
Term 3, 2025	Pilot	Four OSHC sites
Term 4, 2025	Mathematics	Four OSHC sites and initial school delivery
Term 1, 2026	Literacy	Four OSHC sites and two public schools
Term 2, 2026	Mathematics	Four OSHC sites and two public schools

Each weekly session ran for one hour and generally included a short snack period, attendance, guided homework time, a planned literacy or numeracy activity, and supervised free time for reading, drawing or educational games. Activities were designed for different ability levels and refined throughout delivery in response to student engagement and educator feedback.

Development of the Homework Club Curriculum Program

A significant achievement of the Homework Club project was the development of a structured, curriculum-aligned educational program designed specifically for delivery in an after-school support environment. Led by our Head of Children's Services, Homework Club supported children's literacy and numeracy development while also building learning confidence, positive study habits, and safe, supportive social connections with peers and educators.

The curriculum program was designed to complement children's classroom learning while addressing the educational needs of students facing disadvantage. It provided a consistent approach to program delivery across Homework Club sites and ensured students were supported through structured learning opportunities even when they did not have homework to complete.

Examples of curriculum materials developed as part of the project demonstrate a comprehensive approach to educational programming. Term programs incorporated clearly defined learning goals, links to NSW curriculum outcomes, age-appropriate learning experiences, educator guidance, resource requirements and reflective evaluation processes. The program supported children across primary school stages, with learning activities differentiated to reflect developmental needs and curriculum expectations from kindergarten through to Year 6.

Recognising that each Homework Club served students with different needs, six individual programs were developed to support delivery across the participating sites. Following each Homework Club session, educators completed evaluations to assess student engagement, learning outcomes, activity effectiveness and any additional support needs identified during the session. This process embedded reflective practice into program delivery and supported ongoing refinement of the curriculum so that programs remained responsive to student needs.

A key strength of the curriculum program was its alignment with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) curriculum. Learning experiences were mapped to recognised syllabus outcomes and included activities designed to strengthen skills across a wide range of literacy and numeracy domains. Examples included phonics, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, spelling, grammar, written expression and oral communication, alongside mathematics concepts such as number, algebra, multiplication, division, geometry, measurement, data analysis and probability.

The curriculum program also placed a strong emphasis on differentiated learning. Rather than providing identical activities to all participants, learning experiences were tailored to different stages of primary education. Examples reviewed as part of this evaluation included separate learning pathways for Early Stage 1, Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 students, enabling educators to provide developmentally appropriate support while maintaining engagement across mixed-age groups.

Each session followed a structured format that balanced academic support with student wellbeing. Sessions incorporated opportunities for homework completion, targeted learning activities, educator guidance, social interaction and positive reinforcement. This consistent approach helped establish routines that supported learning, engagement and attendance while creating a safe and supportive environment for participants.

Importantly, the curriculum program embedded continuous improvement into program delivery. Educators recorded reflections on student engagement, activity effectiveness, behavioural observations and support requirements. These reflections informed ongoing refinement of learning experiences and enabled the program to remain responsive to student needs. Examples reviewed demonstrated how educator feedback was used to identify opportunities for additional scaffolding, extension activities, differentiated support and enhanced engagement strategies.

The development of this curriculum program represents an important legacy outcome of the funded project. Beyond supporting children who participated during the funding period, Fair Foundations now has an established educational resource that can be adapted, refined and implemented across future Homework Club programs. This has strengthened organisational capability, improved consistency of delivery and created a sustainable foundation for ongoing educational support for children experiencing disadvantage.

2. Evaluation approach

A monitoring and evaluation plan was developed for the funded period and aligned with the Homework Club program logic. The evaluation combined quantitative and qualitative data to assess reach, implementation, participant experience and early outcomes.

Source	Method	Purpose
Students	Attendance records; experience surveys (including drawings and comments)	Reach, engagement, perceived learning and social outcomes
Students	Burt Reading Test before and after the Homework Club program	Change in word recognition and reading-age
Parents	Feedback survey	Perceived impact, satisfaction and family experience
School partners	Interviews	Implementation, student outcomes and partnership value
Educators	End-of-term reflections	Continuous improvement and delivery learning

Data collected

- Student surveys: 48 following mathematics delivery and 51 following literacy delivery
- Burt Reading Test (validated tool assessing literacy): 48 pre-tests, 29 post-tests and 26 matched pre/post results
- Parent surveys: 16
- Teacher interviews and educator reflections provided contextual evidence and helped triangulate findings.

3. Reach and delivery

Delivery was below the original plan of more than 240 one-hour sessions, primarily because establishing school-based delivery required additional lead time and Lansvale Public School experienced a policy change that limited delivery in Term 4, 2025. Once established, however, the school-based model generated strong demand and consistent participation. School staff identified students who would benefit and supported their transition from class to Homework Club.

Location	Sessions	Unique students
Lansvale Public School	19	34
Ashcroft Public School	22	48
Fair Foundations OSHC Edensor Park	38	20
Fair Foundations OSHC Guildford	39	21
Fair Foundations OSHC Lurnea	39	30
Fair Foundations OSHC St Johns Park	38	28
Total	195	181

“In the three terms we’ve run it, it’s been very popular. The attendance has been very consistent... there is interest and there is a demand.”

— Lansvale Public School teacher

Attendance was more variable at some OSHC sites. Competing OSHC activities, early collection, illness, and non-attendance at OSHC affected participation. Smaller OSHC groups nevertheless enabled more individualised support. These differences provided important learning for future program design.

4. Progress against intended program outcomes

The table below summarises the strength of evidence against each intended outcome. Detailed findings follow.

Key: Strength of evidence

- Strong evidence
- Positive evidence
- Emerging evidence
- Not directly assessed

Intended outcome	Evidence from the evaluation	Assessment
Homework completion and study habits	Teacher and parent observations described greater willingness to attempt and complete homework and stronger routines.	Positive evidence
Confidence, engagement and independent learning	Student ratings, comments, parent feedback and teacher interviews consistently indicated positive change.	Strong evidence
School participation	One school partner reported improved attendance for students in schools; the evaluation did not systematically measure school attendance across sites.	Emerging evidence
Access to educational and social resources	The free program provided guided support, learning materials, safe spaces, healthy snacks and peer interaction across six locations.	Strong evidence
Wellbeing and positive peer connections	Students and parents reported friendships, positive relationships and safe social interaction.	Positive evidence
Literacy outcomes	Matched pre/post Burt Reading Test results showed statistically significant reading-age growth among 26 students, with average reading age increasing by just over five months across a 7-10 week delivery period, depending on the school.	Strong evidence
Numeracy outcomes	Mathematics activities were delivered, but no pre/post numeracy measure was collected.	Not directly assessed
Reduced educational disadvantage	The program removed cost and access barriers for 181 students; this longer-term outcome cannot be directly attributed within the grant period.	Not directly assessed

Engagement with learning and positive attitudes

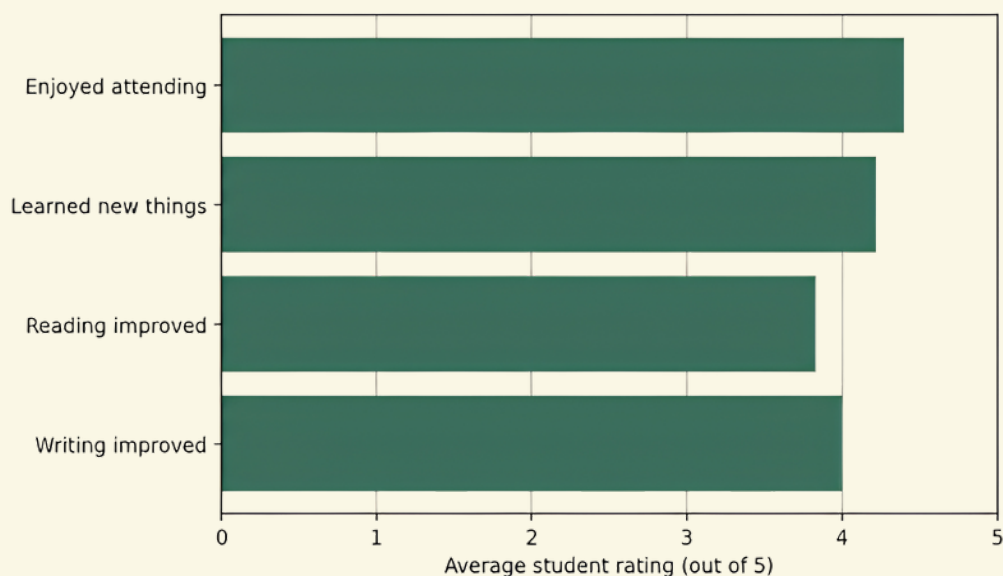


Figure 1. Average student ratings across participating sites

Students rated their enjoyment of Homework Club at 4.40 out of 5 and their sense that they learned new things at 4.22 out of 5. Their written comments and drawings reinforced these results, highlighting reading, worksheets, learning new material, games and supportive educators.

Students' positive experience was also reflected in their willingness to recommend the program: 38 of the 43 students who answered the question (88%) said they would recommend Homework Club to a friend.

Drawings and responses by students on what they liked best about Homework Club.

1. What do you like best about Homework Club?
because I like reading

2. Draw a picture of what you like best about Homework Club

"Because I like reading"

— Edensor Park OSHC student, Term 1 2026

1. What do you like best about Homework Club?
doing sheets like find a word.

2. Draw a picture of what you like best about Homework Club

"Doing sheets like find a word"

— Ashcroft Public School student, Term 1 2026

1. What do you like best about Homework Club?
we get to learn new things that we never learned

2. Draw a picture of what you like best about Homework Club

"We get to learn new things that we never learned"

— Ashcroft Public School student, Term 1 2026

1. What do you like best about Homework Club?
I like how they encourage us to do homework.

2. Draw a picture of what you like best about Homework Club

"I like how they encourage us to do homework"

— Guildford OSHC student, Term 1 2026

Student feedback forms show that children valued reading, literacy activities, learning new things and encouragement from educators.

Homework completion, confidence and independent learning

Students described learning to ask for help and developing a more positive relationship with homework. Parents and teachers observed greater confidence, willingness to attempt work, improved routines and growing independence. Parent ratings for the statement that Homework Club helped their child become more confident at schoolwork averaged 4.41 out of 5.

“These children have gained confidence... they’re more confident in attempting their homework, and we’re even finding that they’re actually doing their homework.”

— Lansvale Public School teacher

A consistent hour of supported practice helped students understand expectations, experience success and build habits that transferred into home and school settings.

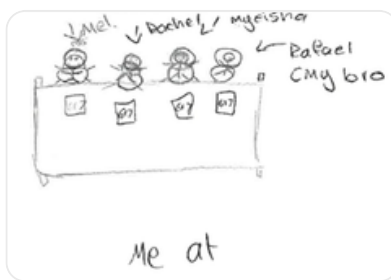
Social resources, peer connection and wellbeing

Homework Club created a safe, supervised space in which students could eat, learn and play together. Students reported making friends (seen in the drawings below), learning to be respectful and responsible, and learning how to play appropriately. Parents rated the program’s contribution to positive relationships at 4.41 out of 5.



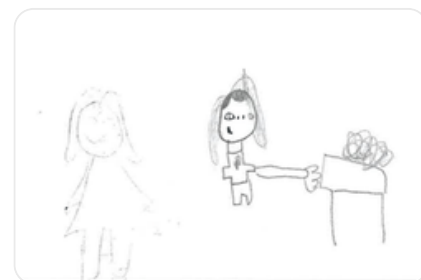
Student drawing depicting Homework Club as a shared experience

— Lansvale Public School student,
Term 2 2026



Learning alongside peers

— Edensor Park OSHC student,
Term 4 2025



“I like to eat fruit”

— Lansvale Public School student,
Term 1 2026

Students depicted Homework Club as a shared social and learning experience. One unexpected positive outcome from homework club came from providing students healthy snacks. As the first 10 to 15 minutes of each homework club started with snacks and water, this eating time became a highlight, as shown in this drawing above. The evidence showed that snack time had the dual purpose of students eating healthy and delicious food, as well as teaching them positive social habits such as turn taking, sharing, and positive social interaction.

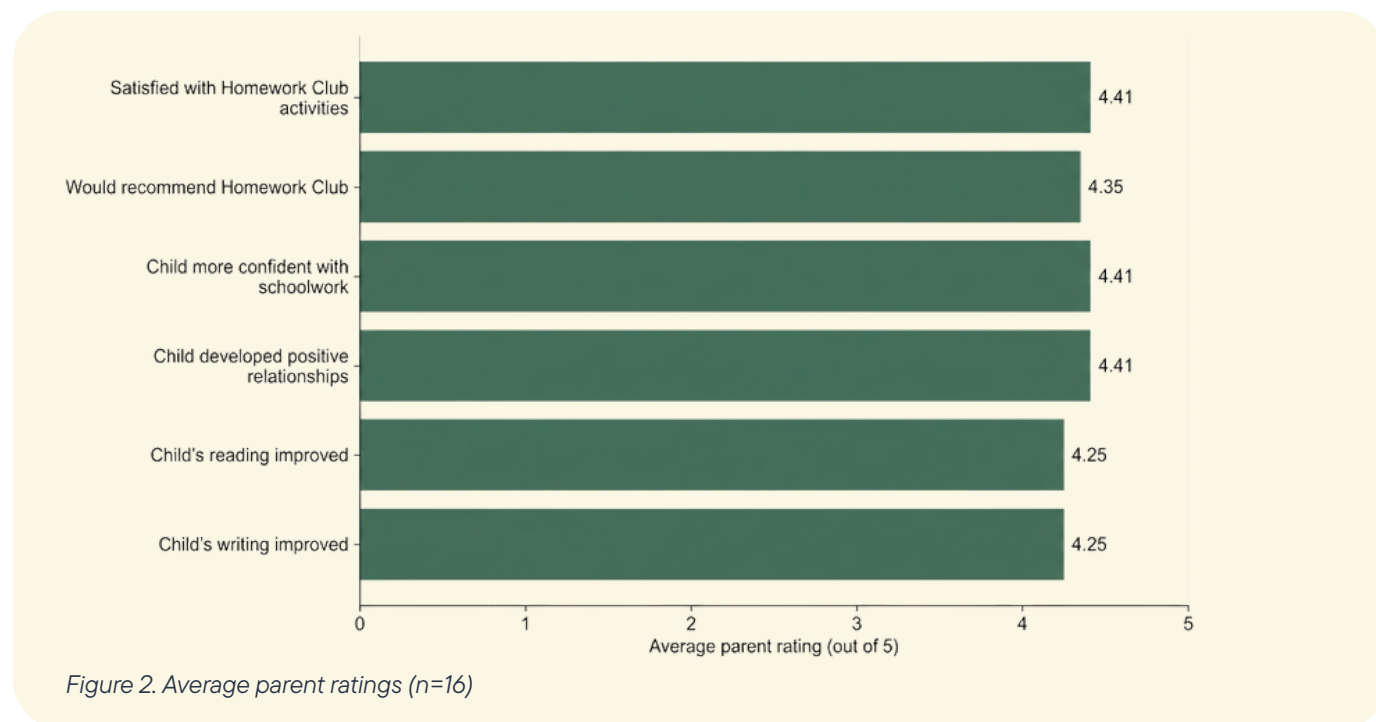
Literacy development: strong evidence

Students rated Homework Club’s contribution to reading at 3.83 out of 5 and writing at 4.00 out of 5. Parents rated perceived improvement in both reading and writing at 4.25 out of 5.

The Burt Reading Test was administered at the start and end of the program. The reading-age results were particularly encouraging given the modest intensity of the program: one hour per week over 7-10 weeks, depending on the school. Among the 26 students with matched pre- and post-program reading data, average reading age increased by 0.43 years – just over five months of reading-age growth, from 7.74 to 8.17 years. This improvement was statistically significant ($t = 2.70$, $df = 25$, $p = 0.01$), suggesting that participation in Homework Club was associated with a measurable positive shift in reading development. Although the absence of a control group means the result cannot be attributed solely to the program, the findings indicate that structured, consistent academic support can contribute to meaningful literacy gains for students over a relatively short period.

5. Outcomes for families and partners

High parent satisfaction and perceived benefit



Parents expressed strong satisfaction with the activities (4.41 out of 5) and willingness to recommend Homework Club to others (4.35 out of 5).

“Everything is good. I am happy with the teachers. They are kind, supportive and helpful. My sons enjoy the club, and I appreciate the great work you are doing.”

— Guildford OSHC parent

Practical support for families

For families, Homework Club reduced the burden of providing homework support at home and offered a trusted, no-cost service. This was particularly important for parents who had limited English proficiency, had left education early, lacked confidence supporting their children's schoolwork, or were balancing employment and family responsibilities. School-based delivery was especially convenient because children remained on site and did not need to travel to another service.

“We’ve had parents say, ‘I can’t help them [the children] because I don’t speak English very well. I don’t know how to help them.’... they’re getting support that [parents] can’t give.”

— Ashcroft Public School teacher describing parent feedback

Stronger school–community partnerships

The program established new working relationships between Fair Foundations and Ashcroft and Lansvale public schools. Teachers reported timely communication, clear term plans and responsiveness when implementation issues arose. At one school, a parent WhatsApp group improved reminders, pick-up communication and dialogue about children's learning. Both schools indicated interest in continuing the partnership if funding became available.

6. Continuous improvement during delivery

The program team used monitoring findings to refine delivery across the funded period. This strengthened implementation and created a practical evidence base for future delivery.

What we observed	What changed	Result
Different literacy and numeracy levels	Introduced activities tailored to different capability levels	Students could work at a more appropriate level
iPads caused distraction and behaviour-management challenges	Replaced iPad use with reading, drawing and educational games	Stronger engagement and positive peer interaction
3.15 to 4.15pm timing was difficult at schools	Moved sessions to 3.00 to 4.00pm	Better fit with student energy, staff and family needs
Complex logistics across six sites	Prepared resources earlier and clarified communication processes	Educators were more prepared and delivery was more consistent
Larger groups reduced learning quality	Reduced group size or added educators where possible	More focused support and improved engagement

7. Key lessons and recommendations

The evaluation identified a clear pathway to strengthen impact in future delivery. The recommendations below are designed to preserve the program's accessibility while improving consistency, dosage and learning conditions.

Prioritise targeted school partnerships: Allow sufficient lead time for school approvals and planning. Work with schools to identify students with the greatest needs and families who understand and support the program purpose.

Use smaller, capped groups: Smaller groups support concentration, individualised assistance and behaviour management. Where demand is high, separate younger and older cohorts or provide additional educators.

Provide consistent staffing: Assign regular educators to each site to build trust, understand individual learning needs and strengthen relationships with school staff and families.

Create a conducive learning environment: Use a quiet, dedicated space wherever possible, particularly in OSHC settings where competing activities can reduce engagement.

Strengthen family communication: Use regular reminders and feedback touchpoints so parents understand the program, attendance expectations and their child's progress.

Refine the activity mix: Balance homework support with engaging literacy, numeracy, creative and life-skills activities tailored to different ages, abilities and learning styles.

Improve outcome measurement: Continue validated literacy assessment, add a practical numeracy measure, and strengthen matched pre/post data collection. Where feasible, track school attendance, homework completion or teacher-rated engagement over a longer period.

Conclusion

With support from the Mazda Foundation, Fair Foundations established and tested a free Homework Club model across six locations, reaching 181 children and delivering 195 one-hour sessions in a 12 month period. The strongest evidence related to engagement with learning, confidence, independent homework habits, measurable literacy gains including statistically significant reading-age growth, access to support, and positive peer connection. School participation was supported by limited qualitative evidence and numeracy change was not directly measured. The program therefore made a credible contribution to its intended short-term outcomes and to the longer-term goal of reducing educational disadvantage, without overstating what could be attributed within the funded period.

The evaluation also clarified the conditions under which the program is most effective: targeted enrolment, strong school and family partnerships, consistent educators, smaller groups and a quiet learning environment. With these refinements and appropriate resourcing, Homework Club is well positioned to continue supporting children who face barriers to educational participation and to contribute to the longer-term reduction of educational disadvantage in Fairfield and Liverpool.

“My daughter has become more confident and eager to learn.”

— Lansvale Public School parent

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