

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE TIMETABLE

The timetable is a necessary tool for the efficient working of a school. It is really a mirror that reflects the entire educational programme of the school. "It is the timetable that supplies the framework within which the work of the school proceeds. It is the instrument through which the purpose of the school is to function." The values of the school timetable may be enumerated as follows:

1. **It ensures smooth and orderly working of the school:** The major achievement of timetable is that everything is planned in advance. All the teachers and students know their jobs as well as the time they are to devote to each activity. It is due to the timetable that smooth, orderly and regular work in the school goes on even in the absence of the Head Teacher or any one of the teachers. If there is no timetable in the school, there is always the danger of negligence of duty, duplication of effort and repetition of unnecessary items and activities. The timetable places proper persons at their proper places, at the proper time and in the proper manner.
2. **It prevents wastage of time and energy:** The timetable shows exactly what is to be done at a particular time. It, thus, directs the attention of both the pupil and the teacher to one thing at a time. Thus one's energy is automatically directed in a particular direction and this prevents a lot of wastage of time and energy. It also prevents confusion, duplication, overlapping and unnecessary repetition on the part of the pupil and the teacher.
3. **It ensures equitable distribution of work among teachers:** With the help of the timetable, the Head Teacher can keep track of the quantum of work load assigned to each teacher working under him/her. The timetable gives a summary of the work allotted to each teacher. The Head Teacher, or another superior officer, can know at a glance the amount of work that every teacher is expected to do. Thus, the timetable helps in avoiding the allotment of too much or too little work to one teacher. This prevents heart burning among the teachers and so unnecessary tension to the Head Teacher on this account. Finally, the Head Teacher has to have a congenial atmosphere in the school for optimal efficiency as well as efficacy.
4. **It ensures equitable distribution of time to different subjects and activities:** The timetable gives due place, extension and emphasis to various subjects and activities in the school, according to their relative importance or difficulty. This is very essential for the all round development of the pupils. This ensures that while the more important subjects and activities get more attention and time, the less important ones are not neglected.
5. **It helps in adjusting schoolwork according to the needs of pupils:** The timetable helps the school authorities to adjust schoolwork according to the physiological needs of pupils. Fatigue, interest and freshness of mind and body are given due consideration at the time of constructing a timetable. As the Head, you should see to it that ample time is provided in the timetable for the teachers to check the pupils' notebooks and also to prepare for their lessons. As far as the pupils are concerned, the Head must ensure that co-curricular activities like sports, music, art and craft, library and other such activities get adequate time. This is very important for the all round development of the pupils.
6. **It helps in the formulation of good habits:** A good timetable is very helpful in inculcating the habits of orderliness, punctuality and steadiness of purpose, both in the teachers and the students. It ensures regularity and even progress by preventing laxity. It develops a methodical attitude towards work among pupils and teachers in the school. Such adherence to a pre-arranged plan of work is the secret of success of all persons connected with the school.

7. **It helps in school discipline:** The school timetable directly aids discipline in the school to a great extent. It prevents confusion and duplication of work and lessens the need of punishment by keeping pupils busy in desirable activities. Everything appears to be in perfect harmony, smoothness and concord. In the absence of such a plan, the school is sure to go topsy-turvy and create administrative problems for the Head. Thus a good timetable not only facilitates work, but also adds efficacy in various spheres. A timetable is, therefore, an absolute necessity for every type of school and its vital importance cannot be denied. Of course, there should be flexibility in the timetable; rigidity may cause problems. The time-table has to be relaxed at times as per needs and circumstances, e.g., absenteeism of teachers. While preparing a timetable certain aspects should be kept in mind to make a well balanced one. It should not be rigid and allow certain flexibility in it as well as in the mind of the teachers and Head. This is important if we want to achieve the aims and objectives, the vision that we have in mind for the school. The time-table should be prepared in such a manner that it can be moulded according to our needs and requirements without upsetting the other programmes. Teacher absenteeism is a common and recurring problem faced by all School Heads. This aspect should be kept in mind as substitute teachers are needed to work in place of absent teachers.

TYPES OF TIMETABLE

A good timetable clearly indicates what types of curricular and co-curricular activities are being carried on in the school at particular places and hours. It also shows under whose supervision and guidance those activities are being carried out. All this information may be contained in one timetable. But the more the number and variety of activities, the more the types of timetables. Only one timetable, with all types of information, does not serve the purpose. It is, therefore, desirable for the efficient working of the school programme to have the following types of timetable:

- 1) **Consolidated timetable for the whole school:** This is also known as the general timetable. This timetable is a complete picture of the entire school programme per day. It is not only a sum total of all the class timetables in a concise form, but is also a record of every teacher's daily work. It shows the details of work of every individual teacher, with regard to his curricular and cocurricular activities in the school as also the vacant periods allotted to him. This timetable is generally meant for the headmaster. Its copies should be available to all the teachers and also be put up in the staff room and students' notice board.
- 2) **Class timetable:** It is a timetable of each class and of sections thereof. It shows the distribution of subjects in each class along-with teachers for each period. It also indicates the breaks in between the teaching periods along with recess, and the periods for games and other co-curricular activities. All the sections and classes in a school follow their respective class timetable and have a copy of it in their classroom; the class teacher, all the concerned teachers as well as every student should have a copy.
- 3) **Teacher's timetable:** Every teacher has got a copy of his own programme, showing the details of his academic and non-academic work. A consolidated timetable, containing the programme of all the teachers in the school, is also prepared for the guidance and supervision of the Headmaster. A copy of this timetable is placed in the staff room and another copy in the Head's office.
- 4) **Vacant periods timetable.** A special timetable showing the vacant periods of all the teachers is also prepared. This is helpful in allotting work when some teacher is absent. So if on a particular day, one or more teachers are absent, the Headmaster must keep their classes busy in one way or the other. And the best way of doing this job is to consult the vacant periods

timetable and send those teachers to their classes who are free in those periods. A copy of this timetable is always available in the Headmaster's office.

- 5) **Games timetable:** This timetable shows which particular group is engaged in a particular game at a particular time. Groups for games are not organized on the basis of sections or classes. These are organized on the basis of age and proficiency in games. So the need for a games timetable is obvious. In this timetable is also shown the number of the playground which is being used by a particular group in the case of a particular game. This will indicate which classes are in the playground at a given time so that it can be checked that too many classes are not there at the same time. This is very essential for the School Head to note as the playground is the place where accidents may occur. Any stray ball or push from another student can cause serious injury. Besides, if too many classes are there at a time, it can cause indiscipline if they are not properly supervised.

- 6) **Co-curricular activities timetable:** In addition to games, a variety of cocurricular activities are also organized in every good school. Their importance in the field of education cannot be minimized. A regular timetable of all such activities is prepared in the beginning of each session showing the different types of activities in the school, the names of the teachers in charge of those activities, the place where they are to be held and the time when they are to be undertaken. It saves a lot of duplication as well as overlapping and facilitates the formation of groups of pupils participating in the activities of their own choice and liking.

- 7) **Homework timetable:** In every school, some home-work is daily assigned to pupils in various subjects. But in order to see that this home-work does not become a mental strain on the average pupil, a home-work timetable is prepared beforehand by each section and class. It shows the amount of home task, to be set by each teacher for the class or classes in his or her own subject, during a week. In this way home-work is adjusted among the various teachers teaching the class and then no teacher can unnecessarily overburden the pupils with work in his own subject without caring for the homework by other teachers. A copy of this timetable is put up in each class or section and the monitor is to see that the teachers concerned have assigned the homework for the day. It is also advisable to send a copy of the home-work timetable to parents to secure their cooperation in this direction. In some schools a home tasks 'exercise book' is introduced in middle and higher classes and every pupil is required to keep a copy thereof. In this exercise book, the home task assigned to the pupil in various subjects is entered by the teachers concerned each day for the information of the pupil's parent's or guardian's and the is required to get his parent or guardian's signatures with date, after he has done the home task assigned to him on that particular day. Such a practice inculcates in pupils the good habit of revision and independent work, even after school hours.