



TAVERHAM HALL

Preparatory School

PREP AND HOMEWORK POLICY

Prep or homework is a crucial and necessary part of the learning undertaken by each individual child.

With the new structure to the school day, prep can be done at school or at home.

Prep becomes more structured and demanding as pupils move further up the school and start preparing for Common Entrance and Scholarship examinations.

Timings and prep timetable

The Director of Studies draws up a prep timetable every academic year. In years 4 and 5, pupils are set one written prep per night, apart from Wednesdays when they receive no prep. In years 6 to 8, pupils are set two written preps per night, except on Wednesdays. Pupils in years 7 and 8 are expected to spend extra time on vocabulary learning for French and Latin.

In Year 3 pupils are expected to do 10 minutes of daily reading plus 5 minutes spelling practice, weekly spelling worksheets and occasional topic research. As the year progresses there will be one additional prep per week in the Spring term and a further one in the Summer term.

In year 4, pupils are expected to do 10 minutes of daily reading and to spend 20 minutes on a written prep on a rolling programme of literacy, numeracy and other subjects.

In year 5, pupils are expected to spend 20 minutes per night on a written prep set on a different day for each of the four core subjects (English, Maths, Science, French) followed by 20 minutes of daily reading.

In years 6 and 7, pupils are expected to spend 2 x 20 minutes per night on 2 written preps for 2 different subjects. They are also expected to read their current reading book for a minimum of 10 minutes.

In year 8, pupils are expected to spend 35 minutes per night on a written prep for one of the four core subjects (English, Maths, Science, French) and 15 minutes per night on a written prep for a foundation subject. Should pupils require slightly longer

to complete a prep to a satisfactory standard, they should use their own time either at home (evenings, weekends) or at school (the Library is always available at break times).

Prep diaries

From Year 3 upwards, pupils are provided with prep diaries in which they are expected to record clear instructions and the date when the work needs to be handed in. It is the responsibility of subject teachers to state clearly how long pupils should spend on the completion of a particular prep. In order to help our busy pupils with their time management, a minimum of 48 hours will be given for the completion of a given prep.

If it is not possible for the pupil to complete prep, or if he/she needs to miss a prep, parents should contact the subject teacher to inform them, and an extension will be granted.

It is the responsibility of subject teachers to chase up pupils who fail to hand in prep on time or who hand in prep of a quantity and/or quality below expectations. Depending on circumstances, a demerit could be awarded and the pupil's form tutor will be informed. If this becomes a recurrent problem, parents will also be informed and a plan of action will be put in place, carefully monitored by the form tutor. Any incomplete prep will have to be caught up with in catch up time on Wednesdays (12.50 to 13.15) or in a break time.

Outstanding preps in terms of pupils' effort and/or achievements will be rewarded with reds and subject commendations. They will be displayed on the Excellent Work Board.

Form tutors are expected to check and sign the prep diaries of their tutees once a week and parents are encouraged to do the same.

Rationale

Subject teachers are aware that prep should be planned thoroughly and should build on the skills and knowledge developed or learned in the lesson. Prep can take the form of differentiated reinforcement exercises but should occasionally allow for investigative work and research in order to help the pupils to become independent learners. Prep is not a testing exercise and is meant to engage the children in their own learning, providing them with stimulating opportunities to deepen their learning at their level.

Types of prep

Subject teachers will choose a variety of prep formats which suit the learning objectives best and which offer a level of challenge that matches the pupils' abilities, hence deepening knowledge and understanding:

- *reinforcement exercises
- *research projects
- *learning preps using particular study skills
- *past paper practice
- *creative writing tasks
- *posters
- *Power Point presentations
- *practising new vocabulary/spellings on interactive websites

Project work could be set over 2 or 3 weeks and subject teachers will ensure that they touch base with pupils on a weekly basis to monitor the pace of completion and the progress made. It is important to give timing guidelines to pupils but to also allow conscientious or Gifted and Talented pupils the opportunity to “go the extra mile” and invest more of their own time into completing high standards of prep, should they wish to. It is the responsibility of subject teachers to provide early-finishers with guidance on how to improve their prep further or with extension tasks.

Differentiated preps

Subject teachers will ensure that preps are made accessible to all children irrespective of their ability in the subject. They will guide the pupils towards choosing the right level of challenge for themselves and pupils should be encouraged to aim a little higher every time in keeping with their own targets for improvement. The learning objectives will be the same for every child but different levels of outcome will be expected depending on pupils’ ability. Layered targets (also called the must/should/could pyramid) will often be used across the board offering 3 levels of difficulty at which a particular task can be tackled. At times, pupils may be set slightly different preps, as deemed suitable to their individual progress by the subject teacher.

Support and parental involvement

Pupils doing their prep at school have access to the ICT suite and can ask for extra support from the member of staff on duty.

Parental help and support, when required, is invaluable as long as it remains within the realm of guidance, encouragement, and suggestion of strategies. The idea is to help the pupils to become more independent, to learn how to cope with difficulties, to acknowledge that mistakes are fully part of the learning process and to recognise that children are responsible for the progress they make in their learning.

Prep timetable

EARLY PREP 17:00 – 17:50

	17:00	17:20	17:35	17:40	17:50
Year 8	1 st Prep (core subject)		2 nd Prep		
Year 6/7	1 st Prep	2 nd Prep		Reading	
Year 5 (4/3)	Prep	Reading+			

LATE PREP 18:25 – 19:15

	18:25	18:45	19:00	19:05	19:15
Year 8	1 st Prep (core subject)		2 nd Prep		
Year 6/7	1 st Prep	2 nd Prep		Reading	
Year 5	Prep	Reading+			

Any pupil in Year 3 / 4 / 5 staying at school for prep will have 30 minutes of “Reading +” supervised time allocated to daily reading and/or independent learning (eg. ongoing research project using the ICT room, touch typing practice, French vocabulary practice on interactive websites, spelling practice in spelling log, etc.).

Prep records

In order to enable the member of staff supervising prep to provide adequate help and support to pupils undertaking prep at school, subject teachers must complete a prep record sheet for each prep they set. This should state clear instructions (including differentiation), a time frame for completion, a deadline (allowing at least 48 hours for completion), and a possible extension task and should be placed in the designated plastic pocket in the Common Room before 5pm.

SM – September 2010