

A Parents' Guide to Prep (Homework)

Note: We use the word 'prep' rather than 'homework' because we are a boarding school and therefore not all pupils complete it at home!

Why do we do prep?

The word 'prep' is short for 'preparation'. We set it because some time spent consolidating the work done in a previous lesson or preparing for the lesson to come is proven to be beneficial in moving understanding from our short-term to longer-term memory.

Having to complete prep in the time given, independently, and hand it in punctually helps to develop time management, good habits and routines for organisation as pupils move through the school, preparing them for the next stage of their education.

We aim to set preps that can be completed independently. If you are helping your child at home and they are regularly taking too long or misunderstanding the work set then please contact their tutor in the first instance.

When do they do it?

All boarding pupils have a 40 minute slot after lessons have finished (at some point between 4 and 6pm), which day pupils may also attend. There are also other slots available at lunchtimes (all pupils) or after supper (older pupils) if clubs or other commitments make it difficult to complete the prep in the usual prep session.

Prep sessions are available to all pupils on Mondays, Tuesday, Thursdays and Fridays (other than Exeat weekends). On a Wednesday, there is a slot available for those not involved in away fixtures.

How much do we set?

The amount of prep set depends on the age and stage of the children. See below for more specific information about each year group.

What should they do when they finish their set prep?

For each year group, there are suggested activities for them to move onto once they have completed the set task for the day. These could include:

- Seeing if there is anything they need to catch up if they have missed lessons (for example, if they have had a music lesson, a sporting fixture or LSU lesson)
- Maths revision, from times tables in Year 3 to MyMaths quizzes for those with iPads
- Languages vocabulary learning
- Revision for upcoming tests, or practice for pre-tests
- Reading

What should pupils do if they miss the instructions for prep being set?

We encourage pupils to see their teachers if they miss a lesson and need to find out what prep they should do. If they don't manage this on the day, they should find the teacher the next day. If a child is ill, then their tutor will liaise with class teachers to ensure that they catch up the most important pieces of work.

Pupils in Years 6-8 should check on their Teams on their iPads, as often there is a message or assignment there that explains what they need to do.

Is there any difference in prep expectations for Academic Scholars?

Academic Scholarship exams usually take place in the Spring Term of Year 8, and therefore those who are preparing for them should expect to receive more prep, in order to be ready for the exams. As an example, they would be likely to have two longer humanities preps each week.

We would therefore expect pupils in 7S and 8S to need a bit more time to complete their preps. We encourage them to attend an extra prep slot per week in school (or take prep home in the evening).

An overview of prep set each week:

Lower School

Year 3: 1 x Maths prep (about 20 minutes)

1 x Spelling prep (about 20 minutes) + regular spelling review over the week

Times tables

Daily reading

Year 4: 1 x Maths prep (about 20 minutes)

1 x Spelling prep (about 20 minutes) + regular spelling review over the week

1 x English or Humanities (about 20 minutes)

Times tables

Daily reading

Middle School

Year 5: 1 x Maths prep (about 20 minutes)

1 x Grammar/spelling prep (about 20 minutes) + regular spelling review over the week

1 x English or Humanities (about 20 minutes)

1 x Science or French (about 20 minutes)

Times tables, French vocabulary and reading are expected once pupils have completed the set task for the day.

Year 6: 1 x Maths prep (about 20 minutes)

1 x Grammar/spelling prep (about 20 minutes) + regular spelling review over the week

1 x Science or French (about 20 minutes)

Maths revision (often on Mangahigh), French and Latin vocabulary and reading are expected once pupils have completed the set task for the day.

Upper School

Year 7: Pupils complete two of the following short tasks on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday: Maths, English, French, RE, Grammar/Latin and Science.

On a non-Exeat Friday, they will be set a longer humanities task.

Languages vocabulary, Maths and Science revision (using online resources) and reading are expected once pupils have completed the set tasks for the day. Regular revision is built in at this stage as pupils begin to prepare for exams. This is also an opportunity for them to catch up any work they may have missed (due to LSU, music or speech and drama lessons, for example).

Year 8: Pupils complete two of the following short tasks on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday:

Maths, English, French, RE, Spanish/Latin/Extra English and Science.

On a non-Exeat Friday, they will be set a longer humanities task.