

# Prep Guide for Parents

At Belmont, we refer to homework as 'prep'. This is the term that will be used throughout this document. The Prep Guide for Parents aims to answer frequently asked questions about prep. I hope you find it both informative and useful.

A few years ago we conducted a full review of prep. The review involved canvassing the views of teachers, parents and pupils as well as investigating what other schools are doing and looking at current studies into the value of prep. From the outset we were clear that any changes made to the current structure of prep must reflect our professional view of what is right for the majority of our pupils.

Interestingly, in our surveys parents, pupils and teachers all saw the value in prep but the overall feeling was that it should be more flexible so that it is not too much of a burden on children or families.

As a result of this prep review, the key word, moving forward, was 'flexibility'. Teachers want to set prep that is valuable but is not too onerous on the pupils so prep now follows the guidelines listed below:

- All prep will be set through Google Classroom
- Prep will be **approximately** 30 minutes in Lower School and 45 minutes in Upper School. Teachers will use their professional judgement, depending on the task, so the expected length may vary from task to task but timings will broadly be as above
- On fixture nights, deadlines will be set for the following Monday so pupils may complete the prep over the weekend if they choose to. This allows families and pupils flexibility to have a clear weekend if they wish to or use the weekend for completing the prep
- In general, if holiday prep is set, it will only be set in those holidays prior to exams or tests for revision purposes i.e. Easter and Summer Half-Term for Upper School pupils. Lower School pupils will not receive revision prep but may have optional holiday prep linked to what they have been learning in class.
- Holiday project work may be set but it will be optional. Project work will be acknowledged on return e.g. being shown in class, put up on display, commends given with feedback etc.
- The majority of prep will be consolidation of the learning taking place in lessons and it may also include project work, an on-line activity, a practical activity or a 'fun' game or activity
- All children in Bus Room, Pre-Club Supervision, Sibling Supervision and Late Room must begin their prep during the supervision session
- Deadlines will be clearly stated by the teacher and be noted in the Prep Diary by the pupils

## Prep Timetable Example

- The following is for illustrative purposes only of an example prep (homework) timetable on a typical week.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Y3 &amp; 4</b>	English	Maths	Spellings and Times Tables	Science or Creative Learning Project (could include research / project work)  <b>Deadline for Monday to allow flexibility on fixture night</b>	
<b>Y5</b> Spellings, Times Tables and Reading should be happening throughout the week.  French vocabulary learning may also be given.	English	Maths  <b>Deadline for Monday to allow flexibility on fixture night</b>	Science	Creative Learning Project  (This could include research/ project work)	
<b>Y6</b> Geography may be set as on-going project work for Y6 and revision work may be set nearer exam times.	Latin	English  <b>Deadline for Monday to allow flexibility on fixture night</b>	Maths	Science	French
<b>Y7 &amp; 8</b> RS and Geography will be set as on-going project work for Y7 + 8 and revision work may be set nearer exam times.	Maths	History	English  <b>Deadline for Monday to allow flexibility on fixture night</b>	Science	French and Latin

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How will I know what has been set for prep?

All prep is set through Google Classroom. Pupils are given their personal login to allow them to access their Google Classroom and are shown how to access their prep by their subject teachers and in their computing lessons. Parents can receive daily or weekly emails from Google Classroom, which provide information about the prep that has been set each week.

Every child is also issued with a prep diary. This is a very important book and pupils must have their diaries with them for all lessons. It is also a useful tool for communication; if your child could not complete the prep or found it too difficult or too easy, please put a note to the teacher in the prep diary. Teachers find this communication invaluable.

### **Where should children study?**

In general, it is better to establish one place that the child can work. With younger children, this is often in the kitchen or dining room close to the rest of the family. As children get older and more independent, their own bedroom may be more appropriate. The following conditions are thought best:

- The place of work should be of a comfortable temperature and well-lit
- The work surface should be flat and uncluttered, preferably a table or desk
- Children should sit on a chair not a stool which can cause back-ache
- The place should be quiet and away from distractions, such as electronic devices or the noise of other members of the household

Many young people (unlike most adults) prefer to work with music playing. If the homework is completed appropriately, then the music may be helping. However, if it is causing a distraction, then it is not suitable.

### **How much help should I give my child?**

It is helpful for parents to ask their child what they have for prep and check what is written in the prep diary. Younger children may need their parents to check they have understood the task but the task should be undertaken independently. It is not recommended that parents sit with their children while they undertake prep. If a child asks for help, parents can of course guide them but if the child has clearly misunderstood a concept or forgotten how to tackle a task, parents should note this in the prep diary or email the teacher. Prep is a useful form of assessment for teachers so knowing that a child has struggled will help them to plan how to further support the child.