

Prep Policy

Senior School

2026 / 2027



Ibstock Place

CO-EDUCATIONAL DAY SCHOOL

IBSTOCK PLACE SCHOOL

Prep Policy

Senior School

Scope

This policy applies to all Senior School pupils and staff at Ibstock Place School (hereinafter 'Ibstock' or 'the School').

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body delegates responsibility to the Head for developing and enacting any required "Good Practice" policies. These policies are non-statutory and do not require ratification by the Governing Body. As such, the Head has delegated accountability and responsibility for the operationalisation of this policy to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) who ensures the consistent application and implementation of this policy across the School. Staff should follow the expectations set out in this policy.

1. Introduction

Ibstock holds that homework ("prep") is an important part of our curricular offer. By "prep", we mean any work undertaken by our pupils outside of timetabled lessons, either at home or in School (for example, in Study Hall).

We believe that prep can help our pupils both to consolidate recent learning and to prepare for subsequent learning. Further, it provides opportunities for our pupils to develop the skills of independent learning which they will need in adult life. It also affords teaching staff multiple opportunities to assess the quality of our pupils' learning.

We aim to provide an experience in which our pupils do not regard the completion of prep as a chore, but rather as an integral part of a stimulating and enjoyable programme of learning.

2. The Nature of Prep at Ibstock Place School

When setting prep tasks, teachers should ensure that they are relevant to our pupils' learning needs and that they are fully integrated into the course of study on which our pupils are embarked. It matters that prep tasks are appropriately differentiated so that all pupils can access them and benefit fully from the learning experiences which they can afford. Similarly, it matters that they provide for an appropriate level of challenge and that they are likely to stimulate the interest and engagement of our pupils.

Teachers should take care to ensure that all prep tasks are clearly explained. Tasks should be recorded, in full, on Teams, using internal guidelines. Ideally, this should happen before the end of the lesson in which the work is set – if not, it should happen by 1630 on the day of the lesson. During the lesson, teachers should instruct pupils to record a short note about what the prep is and when it is due in their hard copy Pupil Planners. Teachers should be very clear about the deadline which attaches to the prep and should be mindful of our pupils' wider situations when determining their deadlines. Overnight deadlines should be avoided unless in particular and pre-agreed circumstances (for example, a short language learning prep).

Teachers are encouraged to think creatively about the nature of prep. More often than not, it will include written tasks. However, it might also require reading, listening or watching, undertaking project work, preparing for tests/assessments, rehearsing a class presentation or debate or taking forward some kind of creative task. Menial, administrative tasks like gluing worksheets into an exercise book should not be set as prep. Similarly, prep should seldom require pupils to simply finish their classwork.

It follows that prep should be carefully planned by the teacher who sets it. Teachers should be mindful of the Prep Timetable and should set an appropriate amount of prep as specified. Teachers should endeavour, so far as is possible, to ensure that the prep which they set neither exceeds nor undershoots the amount of time which our pupils should dedicate to an individual subject prep task. Pupils should not spend longer on each prep than that laid out in the guidelines. If a pupil has applied themselves to a task with focus and the allotted time has been reached, then a pupil should stop working on the task.

All of the work produced by pupils for prep should be assessed rigorously by their teacher. Written work should be marked in a timely and constructive manner, consistent with the guidelines set out in the relevant faculty's marking policy. Sometimes, it will be appropriate for a teacher to provide oral as opposed to written feedback on a prep task and this is best captured as verbal feedback on Teams. In all instances, written or oral, feedback should concentrate on what a pupil might do to improve her or his learning. Occasionally, a teacher might ask for prep to be considered for self- or peer-marking. When this applies, it should be a consequence of a carefully-planned pedagogic process rather than a measure of convenience.

3. Prep Loads

The amount of prep that a pupil is expected to undertake varies according to her/his year group, as do the number of preps set per subject per week.

At the start of the academic year, pupils will be given an individual Prep Timetable which will show the nights on which each subject's prep is set. Pupils will then write their own weekly prep timetables as an activity in Pastoral Time. This allows a level of ownership for pupils and supports their emerging capabilities in self-organisation, alongside their out of School commitments.

The following guidelines apply:

Senior 7: 2 or 3 preps per night. No more than 30 mins per prep. Before the first half-term break in October, pupils in Senior 7 will only receive prep in Maths, English, Science and Languages.

Subject	Number of preps per week
English	2
Maths	2
Science	1
Language 1	1
Language 2	1
History	1
Geography	1
Oracy	1 (As required)
Art	0
Computing	0
D&T	1 (As required)
Foundations	0
Drama	0
Music	0

Senior 8: 2 or 3 preps per night. No more than 30 mins per prep.

Subject	Number of preps per week
English	2
Maths	2
Science	1
First Language	1
Second Language	1
Third Language	1
History	1
Geography	1
Oracy and Debating	1 (As required)
Art	0
Computing	0
Dance	0
D&T	1 (As required)
Drama	0
Music	0

Senior 9: 2 or 3 preps per night. No more than 30 mins per prep.

Subject	Number of preps per week
English	2
Maths	2
Biology	1
Chemistry	1
Physics	1
First Language	1

Second Language	1
History	1
Geography	1
RS	0
DT	1 (As required)
Drama	0
Computing	0
Dance	0
Music	0
Art	0

Senior 10: 3-4 preps per night (approximately 30 minutes per prep).

Subject	Number of preps per week
English	2
Maths	2
Biology	1
Chemistry	1
Physics	1
First Language	2
Option 1	2
Option 2	2
Option 3	2

Please note that pupils studying triple science will have two preps per science subject, per week.

Senior 11 : 3-4 preps per night (approximately 30 minutes per prep).

Subject	Number of preps per week
English	2
Maths	2
Biology	1
Chemistry	1
Physics	1
First Language	2
Option 1	2
Option 2	2
Option 3	2

Please note that pupils studying triple science will have two preps per science subject, per week.

Subjects with more than one prep per week may choose to set a single, longer task for the week; however, this should be attached to a longer deadline so that pupils have several nights over which to complete the prep.

4. Failure to complete prep

Failure to complete prep can seriously undermine a pupil's academic progress and, as such, the School is diligent in monitoring the completion of prep and in intervening when it is not done. Sometimes, when prep is not completed, it can be difficult to determine whether a pupil has genuinely tried their best or whether other factors may be at play. A teacher might request evidence from a pupil (for example, attempted answers or a list of websites which the pupil accessed in an attempt to understand) in order to establish the situation. Teachers will also be mindful of relevant matters relating to Academic Mentoring when making these judgements and will alert the Head of Academic Mentoring if they are concerned that there is a need that is unmet.

If a teacher is satisfied that there are no reasonable grounds for a failure to complete prep, then a prep flag will be issued. Three prep flags in one half term (across any subject) will result in an Academic Detention. If, prior to submission, a pupil knows that she/he will struggle to meet a deadline, then the advice of the teacher who set the work should be sought. That teacher might agree to an extension.

5. Academic Honesty

The terms of Ibstock's Academic Honesty Policy apply very particularly to prep. It matters that the work which pupils submit to their teachers for prep is their own. The School takes a strong line on plagiarism and on the misappropriation of work which has not been produced by the person from whom it purports to come. Fuller details are set out in the Academic Honesty Policy.

6. Rewards and Praise

Our pupils' efforts and achievements in the production of prep should be recognised and celebrated when appropriate. Teacher comment, both written and oral, is an obvious way in which this recognition can be accorded, and significant use should be made of the School's 'Praise' system.

Queries

Queries on this policy should be directed to the Deputy Head (Academic).

Review and Verification

This policy is reviewed annually by the Deputy Head (Academic).

Appendix

Please see overleaf for Guidance for Pupils and Parents on Prep.

Appendix

Guidance for Pupils and Parents on Prep

Pupils should adopt a positive attitude to their prep and avoid thinking about it as an unwelcome imposition. Parents can play a significant role in helping their children perceive it as a stimulating and productive part of the wider Ibstock learning experience.

Pupils should complete as much of their prep as they can away from distractions. Study Hall runs three times a day and provides a quiet and studious atmosphere in which some prep can be completed during the extended school day. Parents should monitor the prep which their child is doing at home and should contact their child's academic tutor if it seems that it is not being done in a conscientious manner.

Parents should assist their child in identifying an appropriate time in the evening for the completion of prep. A major research study commissioned by Ibstock several years ago demonstrated the virtues of doing prep early in the evening, ideally before the major evening meal. Where possible, prep should be done on the day on which it was set, not least because the task and its supporting materials will still be fresh in the mind.

Prep is best completed in a quiet, well-lit and comfortable place with no distractions, ideally at a desk with an upright chair. Parents have a major role in the provision of such a place. Mobile phones should be left in another room and if digital devices are involved in the production of the prep, great care ought to be taken to minimise the distractions which they can offer. Social media notifications and alike should be turned off. Care should be taken with nearby televisions, and background music should be avoided if possible. Our minds work best if they can give themselves exclusively over to a single task.

Parents are strongly encouraged to discuss their child's prep at home. Recent research at Ibstock suggests that prep is often best when it is the source of conversation in the domestic environment. Equally, however, it matters that parents do not do prep on behalf of their child. To do so would clearly undermine the value of the process. By the same token, pupils should not give or accept help to or from another pupil when undertaking prep. To discuss prep with another pupil is sometimes helpful, but it is never helpful if a pupil is not wholly responsible for the prep which is submitted under his or her name.

Parents can keep up-to-date with their child's prep tasks by accessing the portal. They should also sign their child's Prep Planner on a weekly basis.

Parents can play an important role in helping their child to manage workload and to plan for busy periods in advance.