

## **HOMEWORK AND PREP POLICY**

### **THE PHILOSOPHY OF PREP TIME**

In an educational environment, information is transferred from the teacher to the students through the teaching and learning process. This information is then processed so that understanding takes place in the student. The teacher explains, answers questions, and provides examples in helping with an understanding of the subject matter being taught.

Nevertheless, how much a student learns can only be appreciated through an evaluation of exercises and work given. These can be in the form of homework, questions, quizzes, discussions, drills and reading. The teacher is then able to evaluate and gauge the students' understanding.

Ultimately, 'Learning' remains a student-centred activity. How a student learns and studies becomes an important factor in the whole equation. Students need to study, revise, understand and remember. They have to work at it and we must ensure that we provide them with such opportunities.

How much time does a student have upon returning home to study? Parents often share their struggles and challenges in encouraging their children to study. Depending on the socio-economic status of the family, additional challenges like the following emerge.

1. No conducive atmosphere at home
2. No special place to study
3. Too many distractions – TV, music etc.
4. No culture of self-study
5. External distractions
6. Technology
7. Depending on 'Tuition Centres'
8. Laziness

The boarding school option provides this singular advantage. It is in this context that PREP TIME becomes significant. This is integral and critical to any boarding school experience. It is even more important than the 'Teaching Learning' process in the classroom.

PREP TIME remains the sacred time when the student studies by himself or herself. PREP TIME is student centred and student activated. The facilitator is there to ensure that everyone contributes to this process.

This is cultured through the five years of the O levels or SPM programme. The facilitator's role is to encourage and culture this discipline. Students sit in a focused environment and attend to their work. Prep time is just under two hours and can be broken down into attending to homework, revision and self-study.

As students engage in this activity over six days a week, they learn to work on their own and ensure that work given is completed. Over the years they mature and in time develop a culture of self-activated learning. Peer pressure helps them as their friends are all engaged in the same activity.

This encourages the development of focus, personal self-discipline, priorities, preparations and the execution of work. In time, grades improve, self-confidence is boosted and students feel good about themselves. Study habits thus formed last through a lifetime. It is effective, empowering and the net outcome is a sense of ownership of their studies. This is what ultimately inspires 'Life Long Learning.

Teachers as facilitators should encourage, motivate and ensure that discipline is maintained so that everyone gains from this sacred time of PREP. "What is taught is limited but what can be learnt is limitless". The learning here is more than just acquiring information. It is about recall, understanding and evaluation so that knowledge emerges as understanding in the mind of the child.

The regularity of PREP TIME contributes to positive habit formation. The HOMEWORK POLICY contributes to effectiveness and empowerment. Ultimately, it is performance that spells the difference. PREP TIME ultimately contributes towards students developing:

1. Excellence
2. Independence
3. Self discipline
4. Self esteem
5. Self motivation

## **PREP POLICY AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS AND FACILITATORS**

- 1) Homework Diaries will be issued to all students at the start of the year or when they enroll at the school.
- 2) For HIBS students, English homework should be set every day. SALEHA students should receive English and BM homework on alternate days. Homework in BM should be set on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and English homework should be given on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Homework should be set in other subjects at least once a week.

- 3) Teachers must ensure that all homework is recorded by the students in their Homework Diaries. The record should make clear the subject, the work to be done and the date on which the work is expected to be handed in. When the students have recorded the details, the diaries should be signed by the subject teacher.
- 4) Students should take their Homework Diaries to each Prep Class. When a piece of homework has been completed, the Diary should be counter-signed by the Prep Teacher on duty.
- 5) Punctuality must be observed. All classes should start at 8.00 pm and end at 9.45 pm.
- 6) Prep Facilitators should be proactive in their duties.
- 7) They should ensure that all students are present on the correct floor. The attendance of each student should be recorded and the necessary action taken if students play truant.
- 8) Students should remain on the correct floor throughout the Prep Class and not be allowed to move from floor to floor.
- 9) The Prep Facilitator should be as focused as the students. He/she should not be reading newspapers or magazines, or using mobile phones or computers. Please give this 'sacred time' the sacred attention it needs.
- 10) Prep Facilitators should assist students with their homework if asked and if they are able to teach the subject concerned.
- 11) If any student says that they have not been given enough homework, this should be reported to the Director of Studies.
- 12) Decent, casual attire can be worn, but not singlets or pyjamas.
- 13) Eating in the Prep area is not allowed.
- 14) Prep Facilitators should ensure that noise and movement of the students is minimal.
- 15) Students are not allowed to sleep during Prep classes.

- 16)** Any student misbehaviour should be reported to the Housemaster/Housemistress.
- 17)** Any system is only as good as the people who drive it. Take heed of your own sense of responsibility.
- 18)** We all have to work as a team to cultivate this self-study habit amongst our students.
- 19)** Approach the students in front of you as if they were your own children.
- 20)** The Director of Studies will carry out inspections during Prep Classes twice a week. The days of the week will vary.
- 21)** All HIBS Homework Diaries must be submitted to the Director of Studies by the end of the last teaching period of the week (usually 12.20 pm on Saturdays). SALEHA Homework Diaries should be given to Mr Dali. Form/Class Teachers are responsible for ensuring that monitors hand in the Diaries.
- 22)** The Diaries of each student will be monitored to check whether:
- a) Any students are not recording or doing homework.
  - b) Any teachers are not setting homework.
- 23)** Appropriate follow up action will be taken in conjunction with any issues arising out of 22a) or 22b).