



## Clifton Preparatory School - Academic Principles

### The children and staff respect the following principles:

- Support for self-directed learning.
- Programmes which reflect the real world and its changing nature.
- The recognition and support of individual needs and aspirations.
- Involvement of the parents and the community.
- Striving for the development of lifelong learning.
- Maintaining flexibility and accountability within the academic curriculum.
- Fostering critical and creative thinking, problem solving, risk-taking and decision making.

### Message from the Staff

As a staff we take pride in the achievements of all our children. We encourage the pursuit of academic excellence, yet at the same time, instil the important values of respect for self, others and the school. We provide an environment that makes all our children feel at home and that encourages them to be active learners involved in a variety of experiences. We teach them to be self-motivated, self-disciplined and self-directed in their learning. All our efforts around their education take into account the following principles of learning:

- We all learn in different ways
- We all learn at different rates
- We learn through interaction
- We learn through observation
- We learn through effort
- Learning should be fun

We are committed to providing the best education possible for your sons and daughters. Knowing that you, as parents are the primary educators of your children, we encourage your involvement and participation - our doors **are always** open.

## Outings

The objectives of our Grade 6 trips are to build relationships, to have fun and to reinforce what we have learnt in the classroom through outdoor adventure!

1st Term:	All-Out-Adventures and Sungubala (2 nights)
2nd Term:	Injisuthi Hike (2 nights)
3rd Term:	Babanango and Seula (4 nights)
4th Term:	No over-night trips are planned; day-trips if/when possible.

## **Physical Education Programme**

PE occurs for one hour per week where the focus is on gaining and/or improving swimming skills, developing large motor skills and refining various sporting techniques. The children will also do a fitness assessment at regular intervals, so as to monitor their development.

## **Homework Policy**

Homework/Prep is generally given on a weekly basis. Wednesdays are a homework-free day, since there is no formal prep session in the boarding house. **However**, should your child have homework to complete, he/she should utilise his/her time wisely.

We attempt to set work which is relevant and directly linked to what is being done daily during class. Pupils are strongly encouraged to use available time constructively and, in particular, to read.

Boarders' homework sessions are supervised by academic staff.

## **Academic support**

Academic support will be available to all children in Grade 6.

Mrs Cahill will be available for English support and Mrs Rautenbach for Maths support. Relevant days and times will be available on D6 at the beginning of each term.

## **Assessment**

Academic progress, improvement and level of effort is assessed continuously throughout each semester, covering the full of range of necessary skills, understanding and knowledge and allowing each child an opportunity to succeed in their area of strength. At the end of each semester the children are given an opportunity to experience a formal testing situation during Control Test Week,, the objectives of which are to practise study skills, time management independent learning and to assess content and skills covered during the second and fourth terms.

## **A message from the Grade Six teachers**

Welcome to Grade Six. This booklet is designed to answer any general questions that you may have regarding the year. Should there be anything that you would like to be clarified or explained, please feel free to make an appointment to discuss your queries or concerns in more detail.

We are here to provide the very best possible education for your child. This is only possible with your support and encouragement—please get involved as much and as often as you are able to.

Should there be anything that is happening at home that may be out of the ordinary, please let us know. Small issues that may seem trivial to you could have a bigger impact on your child than you think. The death of a pet, an illness in the family, sibling rivalry, Mom or Dad going away for an extended period etc. are all very relevant and we need to know about these changes.

If there is anything that you would like to see added to this Information Booklet please let us know so that we can look into making the necessary changes.

We hope to have a successful and rewarding year with your child in our care.

Grade Six Subject Teachers and Tutors

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If there are any questions, please contact us on:  
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(From the 2nd term: lisa.abbott@cliftonprep.org.za)

## Daily Routine

07h20	<b><u>Children to be at school.</u></b>
07h30	Reading (20 min) & Tutor sessions (10 mins)
08h00:	Lessons commence
10h00	Tea break
13h30*	Lunch break
14h00	Change for various sporting codes

*\*On a Friday school ends at 13h30. Lunch is provided for boarders only unless a compulsory activity has been arranged. Parents of day scholars doing extra activities may request meals for the term at an additional charge. This is arranged through the Bursar.*

## The Academic Programme

The following subjects are taught during the Grade 6 year.

- English
- Mathematics
- Afrikaans or isiZulu
- Integrated Studies
- iPad Skills STEAM
- Drama
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education

Wherever possible subject matter is linked between subjects to enhance interest and relevance.

### English

In Grade 6, the purpose of our English lessons is to give the children opportunities and guidance that will enable them to express themselves as effectively and eloquently as possible, through speaking and writing, as well as to understand information and messages expressed by others.

### Art

Our focus in Art is to equip children with essential skills that will enable them to prosper and grow as adults. While we work with diverse media and topics on drawing, painting and sculptural tasks, we actually practise the 7 “must-have” skills that children should be learning in school to find and create jobs, and help build the future. These are the skills around which our curriculum is designed:

1. Critical thinking and problem-solving
2. Collaboration and leading by influence
3. Agility and adaptability
4. Initiative and entrepreneurialism
5. Good oral and written communication
6. Accessing and analysing information
7. Curiosity and imagination

Our curriculum has been designed to maximize Clifton children’s opportunities to practise and develop these important skills, through creative practical projects and also through engagements in Art theory that support our practical explorations. In Grade 6, we emphasize developing observational drawing skills, innovative composition and confident use of a range of arts materials.

### Music

- Elements of music: Dynamics, Pulse, Rhythm
- Basic music theory, notation, time signatures etc.
- Singing (Different languages)
- Instrumental work: Percussion and melodic instruments
- Composers
- Movement and dance
- Musical appreciation
- Cultural music (folk, pop, jazz)
- iPad projects using music apps

### Drama

In Drama, the children are given the opportunity to express themselves through bodily movements in a creative way. They are taught how to project their voices and use their bodies and body language to portray meaning in various contexts. Improvisation skills are taught as well as the fundamental basic skills of acting and theatre making.

## **Integrated Studies**

Natural Science

History

Geography

*Structure:*

- Integrated Studies is the thematic teaching and developing of children's knowledge, skills and understanding.
- History, Geography and Science are taught and studied in separate modules and as separate subjects within the termly theme.
- Our focus is on assessment for learning as opposed to assessment of learning, although this does still need to happen, of course.
- Assessment for learning takes place through self-reflection, group and paired activities, as well as by way of guidance from the teacher.

*Aims and Objectives:*

- The children will aim at solving problems, making decisions, organising and observing the natural world. They will develop the ability to analyse and interpret their physical and living environment. We will examine how people interact with their natural, social and economic environments.
- Lessons have child-centred, activity-based tasks which stimulate scientific and creative thinking. Briefs are specific and guided to enable the children to carry out their tasks successfully. A wide range of hands-on investigations and experiments will be offered.
- Activities will provide opportunities to participate in investigations and hone problem-solving skills as well as develop their entrepreneurial potential.
- Activities will take the form of individual, paired and group tasks.

## **STEAM Lounge: iPad Lessons**

Technology integration in school is key in today's generation. Children have weekly ICT lessons where the aim is to empower them with skills in fields like science, technology, engineering etc. This is achieved through both individual and group work assessment. LEGO is used to enhance children's problem solving skills, creativity and the ability to co-work with other individuals.

To achieve these objectives we tackle a range of activities and challenges in the following areas:

## **Listening and speaking**

- Impromptu orals – strategies are learnt and practised
- Prepared orals – the focus is on public speaking techniques
- Debate
- Poetry readings
- Listening comprehensions
- Following instructions

## **Reading and viewing - comprehension skills**

- Reading comprehension exercises to practise specific skills – finding information; understanding words; sequencing; concluding; predicting; inferring; comparing etc.
- Reading comprehension exercises that test a range of skills.
- Visual literacy – determining literal, figurative and inferred meaning of pictures, advertisements etc.

## **Writing and presenting**

- Various forms of poetry
- Descriptive paragraphs
- Persuasive writing
- Narrative essays/story-telling
- Practising the planning, writing, editing process
- Focus on figurative language, imagery and emotive writing
- Journal writing

## **Language in context**

- Use of the language workbook to develop a confident grasp of the origins, types and use of different words and punctuation.
- Activities that allow reinforcement of grammar rules, accurate sentence structure etc.
- Weekly vocabulary and spelling activities.
- Analysis of language encountered in comprehension activities and passages as well as while reading our set work.
- Verbal language games.

Most importantly, we read...

Class novels are chosen for their intriguing narrative, figurative and emotive style and are read for enjoyment. We read as a class and discuss new vocabulary, effective phrases and language, themes and characters during group discussion.

The children read their own books every morning from Tuesday to Friday, are expected to read for at least 15 minutes every evening as part of their homework and are encouraged to read as often as possible in between!

### **Maths**

A strong sense of number is at the heart of being able to do Mathematics. At Clifton we have decided to adopt the methodology supported by the Number Sense programme. The emphasis is on understanding number, being able to manipulate numbers mentally and ultimately to solve problems using critical thinking and a sound grasp of the relationship between numbers and operations. Differentiation is key to the success of this programme, allowing each child to progress with understanding at his or her own pace. Concepts are scaffolded and revisited regularly to ensure memory retention and a solid foundation for increasingly more complex calculations.

### **Afrikaans (Choice)**

The aim of teaching Afrikaans is to give the children an opportunity to learn an additional language for communicative purposes as well as to prepare them fully for high school. Games, songs and role play as well as weekly tests are used to reinforce structures learnt. The following processes are covered: listening, speaking, reading and viewing, writing, thinking and reasoning and the use of sounds, grammar and vocabulary and the appreciation of literature.

In class we focus on the following:

- **Grammar:** Children are taught to write sentences with correct grammatical structure and word order. To achieve this, grammar rules are learnt and applied.

- **Oral:** To enhance oral competence, the children are encouraged to apply their vocabulary and correct grammatical structures. They are also taught to deliver prepared speeches and conversations using key cards. Unprepared orals based on the topics in the “skatkis” also help to build their self-confidence when speaking.
- **Comprehension:** The children are taught to respond to a variety of texts such as advertisements, magazine articles and cartoons. They are expected to answer various types of questions based on the reading matter. Visual comprehension is also included.
- **Literature:** Class readers and poems/songs are also studied and tested.
- **Reading:** The children have prepared and unprepared reading exercises. The identification and pronunciation of sounds is practiced regularly. Knowledge of the sounds is vital as it helps with spelling, reading and pronunciation. The children are also encouraged to read for their own enjoyment and to extend their vocabulary. They are expected to read one library book per term and to write a book review on it.
- **Writing:** The children have practice writing sentences, paragraphs, dialogues, essays as well as sms’s, faxes and e-mail messages.

### **isiZulu (Choice)**

At Clifton we have adopted an approach to the teaching and learning of our second additional language, which is essentially introductory and conversational with some writing. The children will spend most of this time involved in oral work and modules are designed to assist their understanding of the language through themes for oral communication purposes. A range of multi-media is used to improve interest and to enhance the learning and discovery process. Basic word recognition is done, with some emphasis on rules of grammar and language.