



# Supporting your child through their exams

We tend to think that our children's results come down to how they do on the day of the exam. Will they be in the right frame of mind? Will they be lucky and get the questions they want? Will they remember what they have revised?

In fact, there are several stages in the process of achieving exam success. The secret to good results in exams is about getting it right at each stage of the process whilst being aware of what can go wrong.

### **STAGE 1: Learning the content first time round**

The process of revision does assume that the content of the subject has been learnt in the first place – every lesson counts.

If there is an area within a subject that your child does not understand, then they need to be asking subject staff now.

### **STAGE 2: Revision**

Even for a student, who hasn't missed a lesson and has paid attention throughout the exam years, needs to revise to ensure exam success is achieved. There are different ways to revise, some of which are more effective than others, and some suit some children better than others. This booklet will offer a way of helping your child plan their revision as well as giving tips on the various techniques available.

### **STAGE 3: The exam itself**

Even with the first two stages successfully carried out, things can still go wrong. There are three sets of skills involved in taking exams – knowing the subject content, organisation, and exam technique.

### **School Attendance**

Every lesson counts.

A 95% attendance record is

- Half a day of lessons missed every 2 weeks
- Two weeks of lessons missed each year
- This is the equivalent to half a year's lessons for one GCSE subject

### **Revision Tips for Parents/Carers:**

- Help your child to make a study / revision timetable which includes the dates and times of the examinations in May and June as well as dates of any Controlled Assessments / Language speaking examinations / unit tests.

- The timetable should be used to plan revision sessions. These should be spread out evenly so that your child is not planning to do too much all at once.
- Have the timetable displayed in their room and help them to stick to the plan.
- Ask to see your child’s revision notes and make sure that they speak to their teachers if they are missing any.
- Encourage your child to ask for help at school on any work that they do not understand.
- Encourage your child to attend all revision sessions offered by the school. These may include lunch sessions, after-school revision, Saturday sessions, holiday sessions – particularly those in Easter and May half-term sessions.
- Make sure that they have all the books they need to hand to avoid wasted time.
- You can buy revision guides to help with study. Make sure that your child knows which exam board and syllabus they have been following for each subject.
- Make sure that their study area is quiet and well-lit.
- Check how they are doing by asking them to explain to you something that they have just revised.

**Revision Techniques:**

What Revision Techniques Are There?

Reading text over and over until you remember it may not be very effective unless it is supported by other techniques.

<b>Visual</b>	<b>Auditory</b>
Make notes on key ideas. Summarise notes on card. Highlight key information. Construct minds maps. Write notes on ‘post-its’ and stick in prominent places. Watch revision videos from the internet.	Make up rhymes. Test yourself, or test friends. Get someone to test you. Teach someone what you have revised (this could be a good parent/child activity). Record key information and replay it. GCSEPOD.
<b>Past Papers</b>	<b>Kinaesthetic</b>
Download past papers and write down your answers on lined paper. Mark your answers using the downloadable mark scheme.	Create revision cards/flash cards. Create mind maps, revision clocks, knowledge organisers. Draw and label diagrams. Use gestures to demonstrate concepts.

## **What Else Can You Do?**

- Recognise the importance of GCSE exams and the preparation time needed to do as well as possible.
- Reward your child's efforts to revise.
- Reduce the number of chores that they have to do when the examinations start.
- Make sure that the whole family respects the importance of keeping disturbances to a minimum.
  - Be sensitive to the pressure and stress that your teenager may be experiencing; encourage them to speak to you about it.
  - Make sure that time is built in for exercise and recreation.
  - Respect their growing independence. Ask them how you can best support them.
  - Help them to keep things in perspective.
  - Take an active interest in their learning.

## **GCSE Examinations:**

The Immediate Run Up to the Exams:

Make sure that your child knows:

- What day each exam is on and at what time it starts.
- The length of time of each exam.
- What is being tested in each exam (e.g. which topics or skills).

Before exams, try to ensure that:

- Your son gets enough sleep, especially the night before exams.
- They are eating sensibly – especially breakfast on exam days. Slow-release carbohydrates are best, such as cereal, oats, porridge, toast and fruit.
- They have all the equipment required: black pens and sharp pencils, erasers, a ruler, a calculator and a protractor. Remember that mobile 'phones, SMART / Apple watches, iPods and other electronic devices are not allowed in the exam hall – even if these are switched off.
- Remember how you approach the next few months can have a real impact on your child's future. Studies show that high parental interest is linked with better exam results than for children whose parents show no interest.

## **Managing Stress:**

Around intense revision periods and examination times, it is inevitable that students will feel a certain amount of stress. Signs could include:

- lack of concentration;
- avoiding people;
- being more sensitive or argumentative;
- changes in eating habits;
- changes in sleep patterns.

Try to note your child's stress signs and take action when they appear. Home life being as calm and pleasant as possible during exam time will be helpful. Making sure other members of the household are aware so they understand that your child may be under pressure and allowances made will be supportive. Your child may need reassurance that it is ok not to be ok in times of stress. Talking about what is making them feel anxious may assist them. Let your child know you are there to listen to any worries or concerns they may have. Mindfulness helps many young adults reduce anxiety symptoms. A positive mind-set, relaxation techniques, regular exercise, regular sleep, eating healthily and managing time effectively all assist with minimising stress.



## **Useful Websites to Aid Revision:**

General Websites:

[www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize)

[www.gojimo.com](http://www.gojimo.com)

[www.getrevising.co.uk](http://www.getrevising.co.uk)

[www.quizlet.com](http://www.quizlet.com)

[www.memrise.com](http://www.memrise.com)

[www.senecalearning.com](http://www.senecalearning.com)

[www.getrevising.co.uk](http://www.getrevising.co.uk)

[www.s-cool.co.uk](http://www.s-cool.co.uk)

[www.imindmap.com](http://www.imindmap.com)

[www.tutor2u.net](http://www.tutor2u.net)

[www.revisionworld.co.uk](http://www.revisionworld.co.uk)

[www.gcsepod.co.uk](http://www.gcsepod.co.uk)

[www.snaprevise.co.uk](http://www.snaprevise.co.uk)