

A Guide To...

GCSE Revision

I must do my revision
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Saint Aidan's
Church of England High School
www.st-aidans.lancs.sch.uk

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Key contents

- How can I help my child try and organise their revision before exams and controlled assessments?
- How much revision should my child actually be doing and when should they start it?
- Sample revision timetable
- Useful revision resources
- How can I help create the right environment for my child to revise in at home?
- Useful equipment
- How can I help my child during the exam period?
- What else can I do?

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What's this booklet all about?

Most teenagers and their parents/carers find the GCSE exam period and the time leading up to it stressful and worrying.

Despite the fact that you would probably love to be able to take their exams for them, you are not going to be able to take your child into the exam room, look at the questions and help correct their answers!

You might also be tempted to try and manage and monitor your child's every move in the run-up to the exams. However, it generally pays to adopt more subtle ways of providing support!

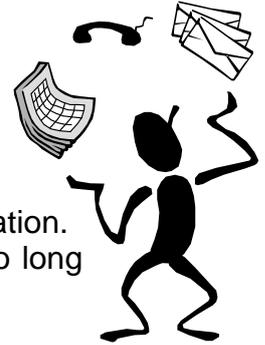


This aim of this booklet is to help you, the parent/carer of a GCSE student, to help your child succeed in their exams.

This booklet will try and answer the following questions:

- How can I help my child try and organise their revision before the exams and controlled assessments?
- How much revision should my child actually be doing and when should they start it?
- How can I help create the right environment for my child to revise in at home?
- How can I help my child during the exam period?
- What else can I do?

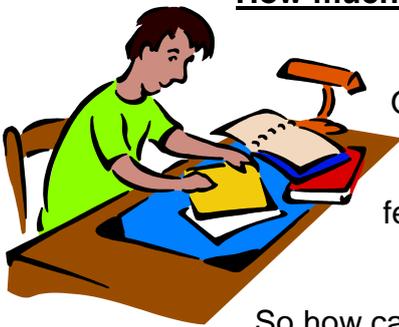
How can I help my child try and organise their revision before the exams and controlled assessments?



Students need regular breaks in their study to help concentration. Encourage your child to revise for half hour sessions at a time. Too long and the stuff they are trying to revise just won't go in!

Things tend to stick in the memory for longer when you review what you have done regularly. Encourage your child to review each topic they've revised 48 hours after their first revision session, a week then a month later and then just before the exam.

How much revision should my child actually be doing and when should they start it?



One way that your child can manage their stress levels is to get organised! By planning their revision time your child will go into controlled assessments and exams feeling more confident and be much better prepared.

So how can you help your child to get organised? In order to make sure that your child has plenty of time to go over all of the topics that might come up in their GCSE exams it is **best that they start their revision in March/April of Year 11.**

No-one would ever recommend that students should spend all of their waking hours revising! However, the following are sensible guidelines as to how much time each day your child should spend revising or doing homework.

- **2-3 hours of revision/homework per night – 4 school days a week**
- **5-6 hours revision/homework over the weekend**

Encourage your child to make a revision timetable. Each "waking part" of the day should be divided into 3 portions.

- On a school day 1 portion for school, 1 portion for relaxation and 1 portion for revision.
- On a non-school day set aside 2 portions for revision and 1 for relaxation.

If you're not sure how your child can put together a revision timetable have a look at the example on the following page.

Revision Timetable

	8.30am-3pm	3-4pm	4-5pm	5-6pm	6-7pm	7-8pm	8-9pm
Monday	School			Tea			
Tuesday	School			Tea			
Wednesday	School			Tea			
Thursday	School			Tea			
Friday	School			Tea	NIGHT OFF!	NIGHT OFF!	NIGHT OFF!
Saturday				Tea	OUT!	OUT!	OUT!
Sunday				Tea			



USEFUL REVISION RESOURCES

There are loads of excellent revision resources out there either through the school, online or in bookshops. Below is a list of just some of the resources that may help your child revise for their exams.

<p>Saint Aidan's moodle</p> <p>REVISION RESOURCES</p>	<p>Many subjects have provided past exam papers and other revision resources on our VLE.</p> <p>Students should look in the specific subject in the student area of the VLE for revision resources. If they are not sure what is available they should check with their teacher.</p>
<p>OTHER ONLINE REVISION RESOURCES - cover most subjects</p>	<p>BBC Bitesize Revision www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize</p> <p>Skool.co.uk - Maths and Science revision http://lgfl.skool.co.uk/</p> <p>S-cool.co.uk - Science, English, French, PE, Geography and Maths revision http://www.s-cool.co.uk/gcse.html</p>
<p>REVISION BOOKS/GUIDES available from the websites opposite and most major book and online retailers such as Amazon.</p>	<p>CGP Revision guides (available for most GCSE subjects) http://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/</p> <p>BBC Bitesize Revision guides (available for most GCSE subjects) http://www.bbcshop.com</p> <p>Letts Revision guides (available for most GCSE subjects) http://www.lettsed.co.uk/</p>

How can I help create the right environment for my child to revise in at home?



As your child will be doing a lot of their revision at home it is especially important that they are given space and time to revise there. We know, however, that this can be difficult! While your child is getting ready for their exams normal life still goes on in your house and it can be difficult to create the right sort of environment for them to revise in.

So what can you do?

At the very least your child will need a quiet, preferably private space (e.g. a chair and desk in their bedroom) where they can study and revise with as few distractions as possible. If they don't have a desk in their bedroom a kitchen or dining room table works just as well, but remember that your child's study area needs to be big enough for all of the equipment, books and other things that they might need whilst they are studying.

It is helpful to encourage family 'quiet time' (we know that this isn't always possible!) when everyone (parents/carers included!) tries to do quiet activities like catching up on emails, homework, reading the newspaper or surfing the web.

This can really help to encourage your child to settle into their revision and is especially helpful when they are not able to study in their bedrooms, or another private room.



Making sure your child has all the right equipment so they can get ready for their exams is also something you could really help with. On the next page is a list of some things that your child could find very useful during their revision.



USEFUL EQUIPMENT

- ☞ Fine-point coloured pens
- ☞ Highlighters
- ☞ Table lamp
- ☞ Watch
- ☞ Calculator (scientific)
- ☞ Pin-board
- ☞ Post-it notes
- ☞ Note or record cards
- ☞ Notebooks
- ☞ Alarm clock
- ☞ Calendar
- ☞ Access to a computer and printer
- ☞ Folders and files
- ☞ Revision guides (may be available from teachers at school)
- ☞ Past exam papers
- ☞ Textbooks



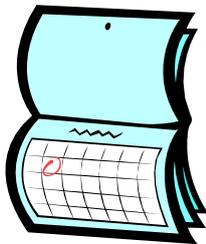
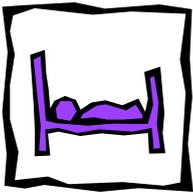


How can I help my child during the exam period?

The GCSE exams still take place between May and June of Year 11.

It is very important that your child is not only well prepared but healthy and happy going into the exams.

Here are some little things that you might be able to help them with during the exam period.



- Make sure that they get a good night's sleep before each exam - it will be much easier for them to concentrate during the exam if they are not feeling too tired.
- Encourage them to eat healthily during their revision and exams:
 - ☺ Plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. Bananas are brilliant for brains!
 - ☺ Avoid caffeine, it makes stress worse and it dehydrates their brains.
 - ☺ Encourage them to drink lots of water - it re-hydrates the brain and makes it work better.
- Regular exercise can also help your child. Not only is it an excellent way of keeping them fit and healthy but it also gets plenty of oxygen flowing to their brains and can help relax them and reduce stress (sounds weird, but it's true!)
- Make sure they know when each of their exams is taking place! Every student will be given their own exam timetable before the exams start. It might be useful to write each exam on to a calendar at home. This will also help them to organise their revision during the exam period.
- Wish your child well and tell them they have worked hard and that they can only do their best.
- Avoid grilling your child after each exam. By all means ask them how it went and be supportive and encouraging of them but DON'T interrogate them about every single detail.





What else can I do?

- ✓ Be realistic - not only in your expectations of your child, but also in the fact that GCSEs are important, and life still goes on.
- ✓ It's important that you encourage without too much pressure. Your child should be happy.
- ✓ Be interested in your child's progress and praise success!
- ✓ DON'T PANIC! You are not alone. If you or your child has any concerns please contact the school.
- ✓ Avoid offering bribes or presents conditional on high grades. It's better to encourage them to work for their own satisfaction and their own targets.
- ✓ Encourage the rest of the family to be considerate.

Most importantly...

As your child prepares for and takes their GCSE exams they are likely, at times, to experience a lot of insecurity and uncertainty. Providing your child with the reassurance that, whatever mistakes they may make and whatever disappointments they may have, you will always be there to love and support them will help them to approach their exams with much more confidence. You can really help them to reach for the stars!



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