

# Revision



A Guide for Parents

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## Introduction:

As a parent or carer, sometimes it is hard to know what to do to help your child prepare for exams. This booklet is designed to help you find some solutions to this problem.

Let's face it, we are preparing our children for a future very different from our own experiences. The chances are that when you were at school, there were no mobile phones, internet or MP3 players. Now they are a part of every child's everyday life. Who knows what lies ahead?

That's why exam skills are so important. If we can prepare our children for the world of 6<sup>th</sup> Form, University and work by focusing on skills, then we are allowing them every chance of success, no matter what that future has in store.

The impact you have on your child's exam success can be enormous. The time they spend outside of school is huge compared with the time spent in school. Ensuring they have the balance between work and play will make sure they achieve their maximum potential and are heading for a happy and successful future.



# Advice

## Incentives...

We all know that results should be their own reward, but sometimes an extra Discuss with your child what would motivate them to set more ambitious targets. Remember to be challenging but realistic. Try concert tickets, a day out, a new phone, a night out with friends or even time off from chores.

## Inspiration...

In order to meet commitments, overcome obstacles and complete challenges, we need someone or something to inspire us.

Examples could be:

- A friend or family member who is currently in 6<sup>th</sup> Form, Further Education or University
- A professional with a career they aspire to
- You could discuss how your own exam results helped you to achieve success or restricted your options
- Role models from the media

## Environment...

Again, everybody is different. Some people need complete silence to concentrate and others like a little 'background noise'. Ask your child what works for them and try to accommodate their needs.

You should consider:

- Having a family 'study time' where everyone is involved -reading the paper, surfing the internet, revising or working at home.
- Changing meal times to fit study times.
- Finding opportunities for using time more effectively. 10 mins here and there quickly adds up. Test questions in the car, discussing the news over dinner or simply talking about what they learnt in school today.

## Love and understanding...

Research shows that the most effective parents provide their children with challenge and unconditional love. As they approach their GCSEs, it is likely that they will feel anxious and insecure. Providing your child with reassurance that, whatever happens, you will always be there to support them will enable them to approach their exams with confidence.

## Revision Support...

Parents can find that the fiercely independent teenager might be resistant to the support you offer. You may have to be more subtle about how you approach it. This booklet can help you with suggestions, but you know your child best! What works for them might not work for someone else, and it might be very different to what worked for you! It's not easy, but hopefully this booklet will help you to try different solutions to the problems of revision.

## Practical Tips

### Before:

Talk them about their learning. Ask them how they learn best and help them to recognise what works for them and what doesn't.

Use eportal to keep track of how your child is doing and the revision homework they are being set.

Focus on the positives. What do they do well and how can they transfer that to other areas of their study?

Have a copy of their exam timetable so you can help them plan revision.

Get them to give you questions and answers so you can test them (if they get them all right, encourage them to move on to something they find difficult).

Get them a watch -helps them to focus on time during the exam and getting to the exam on time (most students rely on their phone for the time -these are not allowed in the exam room).

Encourage them to attend catch up and revision sessions.

Offer an incentive to be successful. Some parents find bribery works wonders, but offering time off chores if they are revising, or a family day out can be just as effective as money or gifts.

### On the day:

Get them up early on the day of an exam. Perhaps allow time for a final glance through revision cards.

Make sure they have a good breakfast. Toast or cereal are a good idea, bananas are great. Avoid high sugar content as this can cause them to 'crash' in the exam.

Check they have a snack/ lunch if the exam is later in the day.

Ensure they have water to drink. A brain needs to be hydrated to function properly.

Try not to phone or text them, it can add to the stress and is always distracting.

## How to Revise

All KS4 students at Bournville have been taught how to revise in Tutorial, Personal Learning and extra-curricular sessions, as well as in lessons. So when they claim there is: 'Nothing to Revise', or: 'I don't know how to revise', that simply is not the case!

What kind of learner is your child?

## Test them

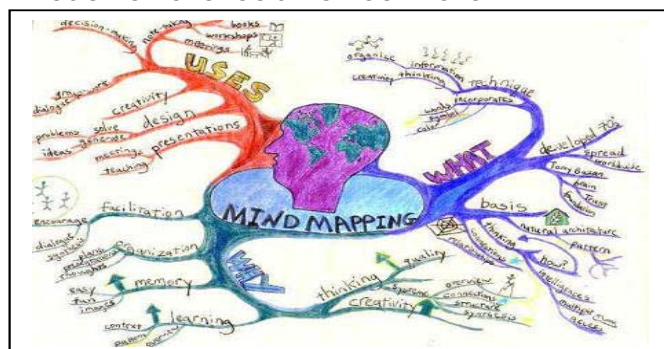
Get them to create a series of flash cards for you to use (answers provided, of course!). Make it fun and challenging -how many can they get right in a row? This also allows you to help them work through the ones they don't get right, and to check they are challenging themselves sufficiently.

## Revision cards

Ask them to condense their notes into smaller and smaller forms. Perhaps a unit down to 2 sides, then one, then a few key points on a file card to look at just before the exam. This helps them to spend time with the things they haven't learnt yet, as you discard the stuff you already know.

## Mind Maps

Starting in the middle of a large piece of paper, students map out how all their ideas and notes link together. Great for visual and creative learners.



## Youtube

Although it can be a source of mindless time-wasting, if your child loves youtube, it can also become a valuable revision tool.

There are loads of films, TV clips and videos that people have uploaded that are directly related to GCSE topics. Just make sure that your child, as with any source they come across, is evaluating the information they find.

Even better, why not get them to create their own revision videos and post them up to get feedback?

This will encourage them to produce quality work as they are going to broadcast it to a real audience.

## MP3

If your child is always listening to music, what else could they be listening to instead? Revision notes? Podcasts? Stories? Poems? A recording of a lesson?

There are all kinds of resources available from school and online. Best of all, this takes the stigma out of revision because no one knows what you are listening to!

## Memory trails

Locating information along a route makes it easy to remember. It doesn't have to be a long journey. Let them put facts on post-its and stick them up around the house -on a mirror, back of the toilet door, inside the fridge, on a cereal packet, be creative! It is surprising how it becomes much easier to remember when you retrace the route later in your memory.

## Mnemonics

Despite the off-putting name, these are very simple. Just take the initial letter of the things you have to remember and create a new word or phrase. You may already know some:  
Never Eat Shredded Wheat for the points on a compass, or  
My Very Easy Method Just Speeds Up Naming Planets



[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize)  
Written and audio resources for every GCSE subject

## Revision Websites



[www.mymaths.co.uk](http://www.mymaths.co.uk)  
Contains revision pages, games puzzles and offline activities



[www.s-cool.co.uk](http://www.s-cool.co.uk)  
Contains revision materials and hints and tips for passing exams



[www.gcse.com](http://www.gcse.com)  
Award-winning tutorials, tips and advice on GCSE English, French, German, ICT, maths and physics coursework and exams for students, parents and teachers.



[www.revisioncentre.co.uk](http://www.revisioncentre.co.uk)  
Revision advice for both students and parents.



[www.sparknotes.com](http://www.sparknotes.com)  
Notes on some of the poetry in the anthology and Shakespeare plays



[www.revision-notes.co.uk](http://www.revision-notes.co.uk)  
Revision notes for most core subjects.

Warnings about using websites for revision:

- It can be repetitive
- In the exam it's pen and paper
- Watch they aren't just on games!

## More internet

### Samlearning

Teachers set up tasks on samlearning for their students to do. The school monitors which tasks have been completed. Tasks are on there for all Y11 students to complete outside of lessons, so when they say they have no homework to do, suggest they check this website out!

### Moodle

Some tasks are set up for students to complete on moodle. It can be accessed via the school website. This is work set by teachers, but also there are revision resources and activities for students to use independently.

### Eportal

Is the system you can access to see information on your child's progress, attendance, punctuality and behaviour. However, did you know that teachers can put the homework they set on there too, so you can help your child get organised and meet those deadlines?

### Exam board websites

All of the exam boards have their own websites which you are able to access. They have past papers, examiners' reports and mark schemes. It's where the teachers get their information in the first place. Just check you know which courses your child is doing with their teachers.

[aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)

[edexcel.com](http://edexcel.com)

# Equipment

To help with revision:

- Post-it notes
- File cards
- Felt-tip pens
- Highlighters
- Large sheets of paper
- MP3 player
- Internet access
- A weekly newspaper
- Revision guides (some are provided by the school, contact your child's teacher for advice, ebay, amazon and charity shops do a great line in second hand copies).

To help in the exam:

- 2 black biros
- 2 pencils
- A ruler
- An eraser
- A sharpener
- Compass
- Protractor
- Maths Calculator
- A highlighter

(Please check the exam board for what is/ isn't allowed for each subject)

Support

The Hub(SEN)

[williams.c@bournville.bha.sch.uk](mailto:williams.c@bournville.bha.sch.uk)

The Girls' Group

[cross.c@bournville.bham.sch.uk](mailto:cross.c@bournville.bham.sch.uk)

The Boys' Group

[campion.p@bournville.bham.sch.uk](mailto:campion.p@bournville.bham.sch.uk)

The More Able

[mason.l@bournville.bham.sch.uk](mailto:mason.l@bournville.bham.sch.uk)

Sixth Form

[mutton.g@bournville.bham.sch.uk](mailto:mutton.g@bournville.bham.sch.uk)