

West Park

'A caring school where we put pupils and their achievement first'

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How to Help your Child with their Examination Learning and Revision

Dear parent/carer,

Our Year 11s are now on the last part of their journey at West Park School. They will receive their mock examination results on 31st January. However, their learning and revision for their final examinations needs to begin prior to the mock results day to ensure they are best prepared for the summer exams.

As such, the guidance below will help your child complete effective examination learning and revision and will also help you provide the support needed to help them through both the run-up to the examinations and the examination period itself. The following advice is proven to help students achieve their potential in the upcoming GCSE/BTEC examinations in a manageable and sustainable manner:

For our Year 11s -

- Make a *Learning & Revision Timetable* that sets aside learning and revision time during the week and at weekends, but also fosters a healthy balance with interests outside of school work. This timetable should start as soon as possible and be adhered to as closely as possible, with the obvious need for flexibility when needed.
- Ensure that your timetable is arranged in blocks of time that work for you, e.g., three forty-minute blocks or two one-hour blocks, depending on how long you can concentrate for in one sitting. And, make sure you move around, have a drink, have a chat, etc., in the study break (10-15 minutes).
- Make sure the learning and revision takes place with no distractions, i.e., a quiet room, no phones, no screens, no music, etc.; concentrate on the subject you are learning/revisioning during your timetabled sessions to ensure you embed your learning.
- Use the yellow Learning & Revision sheets the school provides for each subject to ensure you are learning and revising the correct content and skills (the Learning & Revision sheets are also on the school website).
- If you don't already know your best way of learning and revising, experiment with different methods and strategies, but sort this out sooner rather than later to ensure your learning and revision is optimized. Suggested methods and strategies, as seen in my Learning and Revision assemblies, include: note taking from lesson notes, homework, and/or revision guides (using cue cards, lined paper, A3 paper); practice exam questions (extra to those set by your teachers); mind/concept maps; revision clocks; the protégé effect – learning by teaching someone else (real, virtual or imagined).

- Use the notes and work in your school books/folders as the basis of your learning and revision. This includes the learning and revision materials that you have been given by your subject teachers. This should then be complemented with online materials, such as GCSEPod (the school has a subscription to this app and you have free access), BBC Bitesize, and other such materials, especially those flagged up on Firefly.
- Make sure you complete all homework set by your teachers; it will be designed to help you practise your skills and test your content knowledge!
- If you're unsure about anything or need advice/guidance, ask your teachers, the Heads of Departments, Head of Year, and/or the school's senior leaders; we are all here to help!
- And, finally, exercise, get fresh air, eat healthily, keep hydrated, and get lots of sleep ... your brain needs rest and time to process the information it has taken in!

For parents –

- Encourage and help your child when completing their learning and revision for all of their subjects by checking in with them as much as possible.
- Take an interest in what your child is studying; you don't have to be an expert and simply allowing your child to explain to you what they are currently studying will help them to embed their learning.
- Make sure they take their breaks and have some treats in the house as a reward during their breaks.
- Help them to keep things in perspective. Keep reminding them that the more they prepare now, the easier their learning and revision will be, the more confident they will become, and thus less stressed and anxious when the exam period finally arrives (remind them it is normal to feel stressed and anxious during exams, but that their teachers and yourselves are there to help them with this). And, finally, remind your child that by the end of June, the exams will be finished and they will have one of the longest summer holidays they will ever have!

I hope that the above guidance proves to be helpful. However, if you require any further assistance, please feel free to contact myself or anyone else in the school's Leadership Group.

Best regards,

Neil Allsop

Deputy Headteacher