



**Never Stop Flying**

# **GCSE Success Evening 2024 Student and Parent / Carer Revision and Exam Success Guide**

**Achieving Excellence through a Values Driven Education**



## 1. What is effective revision?

- Re-visiting previous information you have already learnt.
- Reducing the amount of information relating to a subject to a series of key points.
- Doing something with the information you are trying to learn and remember.
- Applying knowledge to exam questions.
- Identifying strengths and weaknesses of current knowledge.
- Completing a revision checklist and ticking off when complete.

## 2. Helping your child revise:

- You know your child better than anyone and know how they learn – do they need to move around? Read? Be in a quiet space of study? Revise in the morning/evening?
- Ensure they start revision early.
- Make sure they produce a realistic revision timetable.
- Buy/Use recommended subject revision books/websites.
- Help them be organised with equipment and resources and topics in order of examination.
- Test your child with flash cards, knowledge questions, exam past paper questions.
- Encourage your child to attend any revision sessions available in school.
- Getting your child to stop and take a break if the information is not going in.
- Don't let them waste time struggling – get them to make a note of it and ask their teacher.
- Don't let them be influenced by friends who talk about how little work they are doing. It is for them and no one else – short term sacrifices for long term gains!

## 3. The Revision Plan:

Your child should plan their path to success. Completing a plan helps them revise successfully and makes it easier for you to support, encourage and get involved. Effective time management and good organisation are key ingredients for success.

### Revision timetable:

- This should be practical and not overwhelming. Try to get your child to stick to it.
- Start by getting them to write in when the exams are.
- Write in the subjects to be revised and which topics – rank order: most to least confident.
- Revision should take place in short sessions, for example, 25 minutes for one subject followed by a ten-minute break and 25 more minutes on the same or different subject and so on.
- It is fine to have a night or day off - it will promote well-being.
- Start with the subjects that your child does not feel as confident in – they will need to prepare more for these subjects.

Below is a basic example of a revision plan for a typical week. The revision sessions could then be broken down into specific areas and topics e.g. Maths could be fractions and formulas Monday, factorisation and areas Thursday. This is not set in stone – things happen, crop up that affect their week.

Day	Morning	Afternoon/Evening
Monday	Free time	Revision: Maths, PE, English
Tuesday	Revision: English, Business	Free time
Wednesday	e.g. dancing lesson/ football training	Revision: History, RE
Thursday	Revision: Maths, Science	Revision: Geography, Business Studies
Friday	Revision: Technology, Geography	Free time
Saturday (am/pm)	Town/Meadowhall/Socialise with friends/Family time	Revision: Science, French, Citizenship
Sunday (am/pm)	Football Match/Dance Competition	Revision: English, Science

#### 4. Revision and memory techniques:

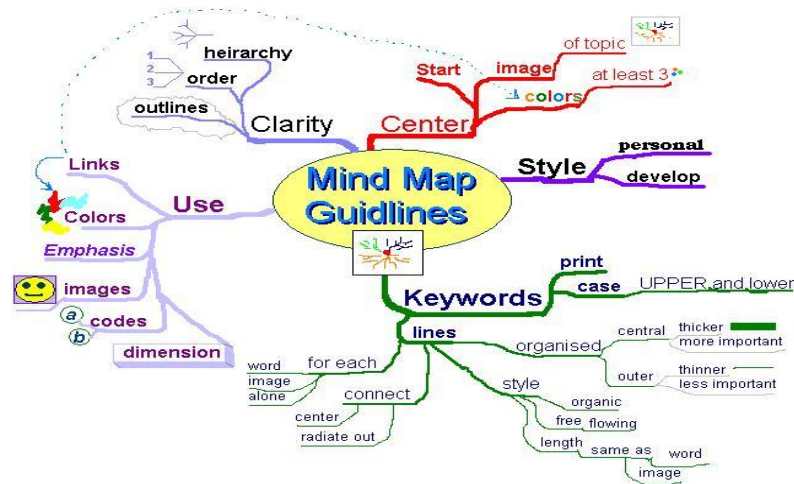
1. **Flash Cards** – one of the most effective ways to revise as long as they use them to self-quiz and test themselves (or get you to test them!).
2. **Mind Maps** – Central topic with stems and branches of information/keywords. Can make them stand out and be colourful for easier knowledge retention and recall.
3. **Revision aids around the house (pictures, big flip chart posters post it notes, A4 sheets)** with maths, science formulas, Spanish language verbs, P.E. definitions, English techniques etc.
4. **Using audio recordings** of key terms, words and playback when travelling, exercising.
5. **Self-Quizzing and testing with friends.**
6. **Watching and note making from revision video footage** - not passively but actively making notes, testing themselves.
7. **Reading a page, shutting the book, and testing** – what can they remember?
8. **Letting them tell you** what they have learned.
9. **Mnemonics and Acronyms:** devices to help us remember. They come in many varieties and can aid memorisation of many types of information.
10. **Exam question practice:** Write answers in timed conditions / read model answers / use mark schemes.



## REVISE $\implies$ REVIEW $\implies$ REVISE $\implies$ APPLY

When information is committed to long term memory students need to apply this knowledge to exam questions.

### Example of a mind map with keyword guidelines



## 5. Promoting health and well-being:

- Starting revision is the hardest part – once they start, you'll see a change in their body language, mood and hopefully energy levels.
- Make sure they stay active between sessions.
- Drinking water and getting some fresh air to promote well-being.
- Eating nutritious food – avoiding sugary snacks – going for fruit and healthy snacks.
- Taking a day off and 'switching off' for a day can benefit your child.
- Having a reward scheme can be effective: favourite TV programme, Xbox, PS4, Netflix etc.
- At the end of the session – get them to tick off revision completed (what a great feeling!) and file notes.
- Monitor the amount of time your child spends on social media.
- Try to discourage late nights.
- Encourage exercise and being active with friends.
- If your child has a job, talk to your child about the hours they work and possibly cutting down the hours until after the examinations – short term losses for long term gains!
- The learning environment is very important – try to encourage your child to turn off their mobile phone when revising. Some students work better when they play music – some students need their environment to be quiet – whatever promotes high impact revision.
- Try not to compare what they are doing with other children – all children are different.
- Go dark – turn mobiles off before well before bedtime to help sleep.



## 6. Dealing with Stress and Anxiety:

- Remember stress is a normal emotion during the exam season.
- Positive stress can give an adrenaline rush to enable optimum performance.
- Negative stress causes anxiety, worry, and loss of concentration or disrupts sleep pattern.
- If they become too stressed, tell them to take time away from work and revision and do something they enjoy.
- Exercise is an excellent stress reliever as it releases stress fighting hormones: serotonin and dopamine.
- Be positive and have a 'can do' attitude (parents and students!)
- Help with organisation of time and resources – not being organised is a major contributor to anxiety as children feel overwhelmed.
- They should always talk through their emotions with family and friends.

## 7. The Exams:

### Preparation:

1. Day before the exam their revision should be short enough to read through in one session – it will re-enforce key words and concepts – flashcards are great for this!
2. They should only focus on revising one or two key areas immediately before the exam.
3. Know their exam timetable - all our morning exams begin at 8.45am (students must be in the amphitheatre by 08.30am) and afternoon ones at 1pm (students must be in the amphitheatre by 12.45pm)
4. They should allow time for their brain to activate – shower, breakfast, get some fresh air.
5. Keep to a normal routine – go to bed and get up at the normal time.
6. Uniform is compulsory for all exams.
7. They can take water into the exam, without a label but no food – hydration helps retention and concentration.
8. Don't panic (parents and students!).

### Exam Tips:

- Read ALL instructions carefully – plan the answer.
- Your child should look at how many marks are available for a question – this is a guide to how much detail they should include.
- Long questions – terminology, mind maps, bullet points, structure.
- Highlight key words in a question –breakdown the question and answer each part.
- Not to spend too long on one question – set out a timescale to answer each question.
- They should always get a good night's sleep, eat healthily and drink water.



## During the exam:

- Once inside the exam room silence is a must and they should not communicate with any other candidates.
- **Smart phones, iPods, smart watches or any products with an electronic communication/storage device or digital facility must not be taken into the exam under any circumstances. If a candidate is found with any of these items, it may result in disqualification.**
- Bags and coats must be stored in lockers.
- Nerves are good (for you and them!). They help adrenalin and performance but remind them to keep it all in perspective. If they have tried their best, no-one can ask any more.
- Any questions – they should put their hand up and ask the invigilator.
- They shouldn't be afraid to write down any key formulae, facts, quotes, or key words – it will help them during the exam.
- They should always check their answers – read through and they may find information comes to them.

