



How can I help my  
child to prepare for  
their GCSEs?



Preparing for exams and beyond.....

Remind your child to really **visualise the day in August they collect their results**. Discuss what they want to see in **their** envelope. How is this different to their current data and what could be done to make a difference?

The exam period is perhaps just eight weeks out of their life. After this, back to the normal routine!

Exams are stressful for all concerned and hard work. Your child will be feeling the pressure and will be tired, although they may well not admit any of this to you. We offer this advice as the ideal but recognise that it will not suit every family's circumstances.

- Read through the student booklets and encourage your child to follow the advice given.
- Try to ensure your child gets an early night before an exam day.
- Breakfast is proven to improve and sustain concentration. A cereal bar or banana is better than no breakfast at all.

What are we  
doing in school  
to support your  
child?

We offer an enormous amount of support to students whilst they are preparing for exams. A few of these are listed below.

- Study skills sessions.
- Breakfast revision sessions before exams wherever possible.
- Revision sessions after school, or sometimes during school hours.
- Training of all staff in revision techniques for students.
- Advice on revision techniques and on how best to answer exam papers given to all students.
- Intervention offered to students who are underperforming in their subjects.

- Time to redo controlled assessments in some subjects.
- Where students have finished a subject early, time is allocated to spend in another subject.
- Lunchtime drop in surgeries for most subjects in school.
- We offer support through tutors or personal mentors for students who are unduly stressed or anxious about exams.

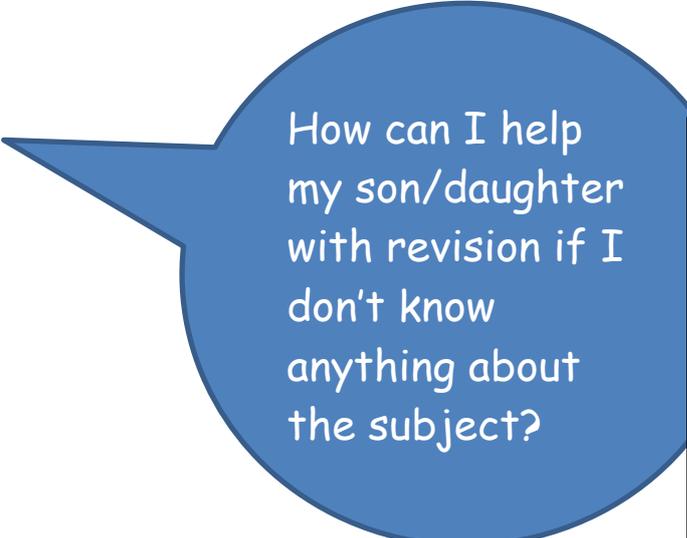
Please feel free to call in and talk to us at school if you would like further details or just general advice. Speak to your son/daughter's form tutor, or subject teachers, or the Teaching and Learning team:

Mrs Buthee at [stdbuthee@redborne.beds.com](mailto:stdbuthee@redborne.beds.com)

Mrs Cook at [stmcook@redborne.beds.com](mailto:stmcook@redborne.beds.com)

Ms Brennan at [stnbrennan@redborne.beds.com](mailto:stnbrennan@redborne.beds.com)

Mrs Manley at [sthmanley@redborne.com](mailto:sthmanley@redborne.com)



How can I help my son/daughter with revision if I don't know anything about the subject?

- Testing your child on their key facts, revision notes, revision book or exercise book will really help. **You do not have to know anything at all about the subject they are revising.** Ask them to tell you about a topic and where possible ask them to explain any key facts. Understanding is crucial for the higher grades.
- **Shared learning.** Help by testing your son/daughter on a topic after they have revised. (You have the work in front of you, they tell you about it). You can ask questions from the information. Learn a topic together and test each other!

How much  
revision should  
my son/daughter  
be doing?

Revision is an integral part of the school year, not just something that happens at May half term of year 11!

**All year:**

- At the end of each day your son/daughter could consider what they have learned, perhaps by making a short summary
- Encourage homework to be done in regular amounts every weekday evening. If students are not given any set homework, they can always organise notes from their schoolwork, prepare revision cards etc. or revisit a topic that they had difficulties with.

**Once the exam period draws near:**

- We recommend revision every day in the six weeks before exams, with more time spent over the weekend.
- Little and often is best for memory work. Your son/daughter should work for no longer than about 45 minutes at a time. Then get up and do something else for 20 minutes.
- Switch off the internet!! This is normally not needed for revision and is a real distraction. Oh, and put the X- box in the loft!!!

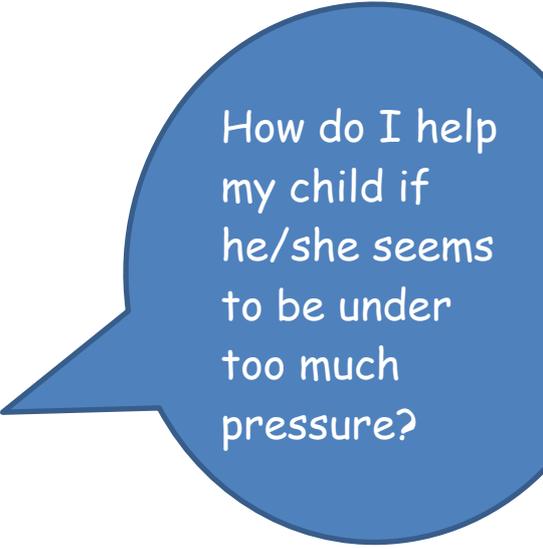
- Where space allows, a quiet area to study, where your son/daughter can leave out all of their work without having to keep putting everything away at the end of a session, is ideal.
- We can offer homework clubs at school if you do not have anywhere suitable for them to work at home.

Where should revision take place?

What if my son/daughter says they have no revision to do, or that they can't revise a particular subject?

There is always revision that can be done!

- Encourage them to use the strategies in their 'when and how should I revise' booklet, or in subject specific revision guides that their teachers may have given them.
- It is NEVER too late to start revising and every little counts. It is not the time spent that is useful, but the effectiveness of the technique they use. In fact, students can spend a lot of time 'revising' and actually learn very little.
- There are many apps you can get hold of, for example the Science app for GCSE. These are often very helpful to stimulate flagging interest on the part of the student.
- Encourage them to look on the INTERNET for past exam papers and to practise answering them.



How do I help my child if he/she seems to be under too much pressure?

- You could help them to plan what it is they have to do - sometimes students don't know where to start. There is an example of a revision timetable in your son/daughter's 'How and when should I revise' booklet.
- Check that they know exactly what it is they are aiming for. Encourage them to talk to their subject teacher if they are concerned about an aspect of a particular school subject, or perhaps to make an appointment for a careers interview if they are worried about what they are going to do after the GCSEs.
- Make sure they have built some leisure time into their study plan, and that they are going to bed at a reasonable hour.

- It is our experience that students can revise in a number of interesting ways - do not be alarmed if you hear them singing their maths formulas!
- Look at the booklet 'How and when should I revise?' with your son/daughter and help them to choose which of the suggested strategies would be most useful for them. (NB: just reading through notes is rarely the best way to remember information.)



How DO you revise?