



25 October 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

Revision, Reading, Rest - Repeat

Revise, Revise, Revise

We know that many students in Years 11 are already actively revising; this is highly commendable. If your son/ward is not, it is never too late to start. As a general rule, students should be revising for two hours on every school evening and four hours each day over the weekend and during holiday periods. In the lead-up to internal assessments in December, these same principles apply to all students.

Highly effective, *active* revision involves retrieval practice using:

- flash cards
- knowledge organisers: revision clocks, revision quilts, Learn Its
- self-assessed past papers
- testing using online platforms

Active revision also involves rote-learning facts and quotations as well as note-taking, annotation and dual-coding (turning words into pictures and pictures into words). Specific subject revision links can be found [on the school website](#).

Crucially, effective revision does **not** involve simply reading and highlighting text; this is known as passive revision, and it is shown to be highly ineffective.

Please monitor the revision strategies of your son/ward; ask to see evidence of his daily revision.

Progress and Preparation Activities (PPA) - Homework

Completion of PPA (homework) is revision. Given this, it is vitally important that all Year 11 students complete their PPA from the past six weeks. To monitor whether this has been completed, please ask your son/ward to show you their INSIGHT tracker. Alternatively, your son/ward can also show you his completion rates using the:

- Educake platform - revision for English Literature.
- Dr Frost platform - revision for maths.
- MyGCSEScience platform - revision for the three sciences (biology, chemistry, physics).

Please ask your son/ward to show you his completed PPA. If he has gaps in his PPA, ensure that he urgently completes this work because they represent essential knowledge. For example, using Educake, the online quizzes, tests his knowledge of the four set texts assessed in GCSE English Literature.

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Read, Read, Read

Almost 1800 reading books have been borrowed from the school library over the past six weeks. This phenomenal figure shows how so many of our students are hooked on reading. It goes without saying that reading is fundamental to success in all subjects. Over the half-term break, please check in with what book your son/ward is reading, ensuring that he reads little and often. Ask him to read aloud, read to siblings/cousins, and read to you. Good readers become good speakers and, essentially, good speakers become good writers; when this happens, students make rapid progress.

Reading more widely will also support the progress of your son/ward in GCSE English Language, in which all texts are unseen until the day of the examination. Improving reading confidence is the best preparation for the two papers that your son/ward will sit in the summer examination series. Reading also supports the development of many of the key skills required for accessing grades 6 and higher in GCSE English Language, including:

1. using language precisely and concisely
2. exploring the layers of meaning in texts
3. spelling, punctuating and using grammar accurately and for effect (SPaG)
4. identifying patterns in language and making links across texts
5. considering alternative interpretations
6. exploring writers' intentions.

MIND – Positive Wellbeing and Mental Health

Finally, it is important that over the half-term break, we all take time to support our wellbeing and mental health by living out our well-embedded MIND principles daily, as pictured below.



Have a great half-term.

Yours faithfully,

Simon Fisher
Co-Headteacher

Jo Higginbottom
Co-Headteacher