



# SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD THROUGH THEIR GCSEs

GCSE examinations can be a worrying prospect for your child and they will be under a great deal of pressure with deadlines and examination preparation. Here's how you can help.

## POSITIVE START TO THE DAY

The beginning of the school day can be a rush for everyone. Here are some tips for a routine in the morning and evening to help the day start smoothly and with minimum stress.

### The night before

Encourage your child to pack their school bag and lay out their uniform before going to bed each evening. Check for letters home, permission forms or homework diaries to sign as this will help avoid early morning panic and items being forgotten.

### Breakfast

Try to make sure your child eats breakfast. This provides essential energy and will help him or her perform better at school.

### Don't rush

Allow plenty of time for your child to get to school - build extra time into your morning routine so that if there are transport or other problems, he or she won't be late for registration.

## ENSURE YOU ARE KEPT INFORMED

Signing up to the schools Facebook, Twitter, text and email communications can ensure you have a better understanding of what's actually going on in school and what teachers are communicating to both students and parents.

## PROVIDING ALL-ROUND SUPPORT

The best way to support your child during this stressful time is to make home life as calm and pleasant as possible. Try not to nag or make too many demands. Arguments are counterproductive and will only add unnecessary stress. Make sure there are plenty of healthy snacks in the fridge and try to provide good, nutritious food at regular intervals. Encourage your child to join family meals, even if it's a busy revision day - it's important to have a change of scene and get away from the books and computer for a while. Also encourage your child to take regular exercise to help clear the mind.



## HOMWORK

Homework can often feel like a chore, and there are a million things your child would rather be doing! However, in years 10 and 11 your child should aim to do from 90 to 150 minutes of homework per day. Though this work is done independently, your interest and input is still important and helps your child to do well. Ask your child if there's anything you can do to help with homework. Discuss the organisation of the work. If your child has several assignments due in on the same day, suggest they space the work out rather than leave it all until the night before.

- ✔ **Set up the perfect study space**  
Provide somewhere that's well lit, not too hot or cold, with enough space for all their materials and without distractions.
- ✔ **Choose the best time to work**  
Will they get their homework done better and faster if they do it right after school? Pick the best time and help them stick to it.
- ✔ **No homework right before bed**  
Doing homework right before bed can stress them out and mess with their sleep patterns. Help them get it done earlier and enjoy their rest.
- ✔ **Start with the most difficult**  
Starting with the biggest or most difficult and then moving on to the easiest parts will make it seem much less of a chore.
- ✔ **Plan ahead**  
If they have a large project coming up help them work out realistically how long it is going to take and schedule when it can be done to avoid last minute panic.

## REVISION

The secret to doing well in exams lies in planning. You can help your child to create a clear revision plan and method of studying that will make them feel in control of their work.

- ✔ Work out a revision timetable for each subject
- ✔ Break revision time into small chunks - hour-long sessions with short breaks at the end of each session often work well
- ✔ Condense notes onto postcards to act as revision prompts
- ✔ Buy new stationery, highlighters and pens to make revision more interesting
- ✔ Go through school notes with your child or listen while they revise a topic
- ✔ Time your child's attempts at practice papers

## THE DAY OF THE EXAM

It's important to get a good night's sleep before an exam, so discourage your child from staying up late to cram. Make sure he or she eats a good breakfast on the morning of the exam and get them there with plenty of time. Reassure them that although you want them to do well no matter what happens you are very proud of them.

*"I can genuinely say that my daughter could not have managed without GCSEPod. I only wish that I'd known about GCSEPod when her GCSEs began, as I know that if she'd used it to reinforce her learning after each topic area, the impact would have been even greater."*

Lisa Chappell, Parent

## HOW CAN GCSEPOD HELP?

We understand how important it is for you to support your child during their GCSEs, so we've created a page full of useful advice, guidance and resources, especially for you!

- ✔ GCSEPod makes it easy to understand the subject knowledge your child is learning.
- ✔ Log into your child's account to monitor homework and any areas in which they may be struggling.
- ✔ Monitor your child's progress for every subject throughout the year.
- ✔ Our support team is on-hand to answer your questions even during school hols!
- ✔ The parents page on our website is packed full of useful resources to help and support both you and your child.