

## Revision and Exam Tips for Parents

Exams aren't just tough for students: parents can find them difficult and stressful too. At Ingleby Manor School we want your child to succeed and so we've produced this short guide to help you help them. Your support can make a real difference. We know teenagers perform best when they, their parents and teachers all do their bit to support them through this important time.

### Place and Routine

If you can, provide a quiet, solitary space where they can work at the same time every

day. The kitchen table is usually good and in front of the television is normally bad.

Bedrooms aren't ideal because they are associated with relaxation. The fewer distractions the better in a perfect world so they can practise working in exam conditions. However, don't feel guilty as a parent if you can't provide the ideal environment. Your child is used to working in a classroom which is rarely completely silent. Encourage them to leave their phone in another room. They may not believe it to start with but it's important they understand that their friends will still be there when they switch it back on, the world won't have been destroyed and life as they know it will continue.

### Nerves and Anxiety

Sometimes your child might be more anxious about exams than it first appears. The classic sign of this is grumpiness. Being difficult and uncommunicative can be an attempt to hide worry. Anxiety can be linked to poor preparation. Encouraging your child to draw up a revision timetable and then stick to it can lead to increased confidence. Try to talk to your child about feelings. If they are less than communicative (my son is often monosyllabic), you could start by talking about how you felt when you did your exams. This can feel like hard work at times but it's worth it in the end. Encouragement Works Better than Pressure or Nagging. Encourage them positively. Below are some examples of what you could say.

'An hour's revision now could make a big difference to your final result.'

'It's a slog now but think how you'll feel on Results' Day.'

'What are you planning to revise today?'

'What can I do to help you revise?'

'It's hard going but it doesn't last forever. You just have to keep at it.'

'Effort now will pay off in the long term. Keep looking to your future.'

## Rewards

Some parents offer cash incentives for grades on Results' Day. We would suggest you don't do this because it can put extra pressure on your child and even if they work hard, they may not achieve the stipulated levels. Instead, reward effort. Offer an incentive for time spent doing quality revision. It doesn't have to be money. It could be saying you will cook their favourite meal on the weekend, or you will take them to football practice, so they don't have to walk. You know your children and what they like and value. Little treats can work in themselves but also have the powerful effect of showing you have noticed their effort and you care. Just a positive comment about the work they are putting in can make a big difference.

## Long-Term Memory

Research shows that information isn't retained for a long period of time if it is learned quickly over a short period. Facts need to be revisited and re-tested if they are to stay in our brains. Encourage your child to revise something, leave a time gap and then return to it. This pattern needs to be repeated several times to guarantee success. It could take weeks or months to achieve true learning and retention.

## Sleep

The brain works better when it gets enough sleep on a regular basis. Teenagers need more sleep than adults anyway because they are still growing. Your child will perform better mentally if he or she isn't tired. Some teens can get into bad habits around going to bed. Too much screen time, having phones actually in their beds, coffee too late, eating just before turning in – all these can have a negative effect on sleep. Caffeine-fuelled late nights are rarely as productive as sensible bed times and a good Exercise and Relaxation night's sleep.

## Exercise & Relaxation

Some students work too hard and take too few breaks. It doesn't help them in the long term. Nobody can work hard all the time. We all need breaks and to get our minds off our work. Revision should be done in short, frequent bursts. Exercise also helps our brains to work better. Encouraging your teenager to continue playing sport or being active is important. Suggesting they get out in the fresh air and burn some calories will not only keep them physically healthy, but it will also aid them in keeping stress at a manageable level and boost self-esteem and mental well-being. Mixing with friends, going to the park, even spending some time playing computer games – these can all help your child remain positive and focused.

Everything in balanced moderation.

## Exam Day

When the Exam Dates Arrive Make sure the exam dates and times are displayed prominently. Try gentle prompts as reminders, such as,

'You've been working hard studying for Maths.

You'll be able to show what you've learned tomorrow.'

Make sure your child is on time.

Breakfast can make a big difference, particularly well into an exam when energy levels could start to drop. Try to make sure your teen doesn't drink too much coffee. Energy drinks are also counter productive.

Remember that the exam period doesn't last forever.

## We're Here to Help

There are revision sessions being run after school on a regular basis. If you are worried about your child, contact us. Email your child's Learning Manager