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Millthorpe  
School



# Supporting your child through the GCSE exam process



Millthorpe  
School

Millthorpe School  
Nunthorpe Avenue  
York YO23 1WF

Tel: 01904 686400  
admin@millthorpe.elc.org.uk  
www.millthorpeschool.co.uk

[www.millthorpeschool.co.uk](http://www.millthorpeschool.co.uk)



As a parent, you play a vital role in your child's success. Your support can make a huge difference in their confidence and ability to cope with the pressures of GCSE exams.

# Navigating the GCSE landscape

## Be there for them...

The best way to support your child during the stress of revision and exams is to make home life as calm and pleasant as possible. It helps if other members of the household are aware that your child may be under pressure and that allowances might need to be made for this. Let them know you love them through highs and lows.

## Planning ahead

The secret to doing well in exams lies in planning ahead and staying calm. 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 and by talking to them about the revision they are completing each day. Mapping out their time is also important to ensure that students do not work too hard – they need regular breaks and time to do the things they enjoy.



# Study essentials for your child

## A space to revise

One of the best ways to support your child is to ensure they have a space to revise. Studying alone in a quiet room suits some people, but not everyone likes working in silence. Your child may like playing music quietly in the background or revising with a friend.

## Brain food

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.

## Keep on moving

Exercise can help boost energy levels, clear the mind and relieve stress. It doesn't matter what it is – walking, cycling, swimming, football and dancing are all good, so encourage your child to take regular exercise. Activities that involve other people can be particularly helpful but even

a brisk walk around the block can help clear the mind before the next revision session.

## A good night's sleep

Encourage your child to wind down before bed and give themselves half an hour or so between studying or using screens and going to bed to help them get a good night's sleep. Switching off can go a long way in helping them to fall and stay asleep which will help keep their mind fresh for their exams and can help them manage or reduce stress. Discourage your child from staying up late to cram.

## Talk it out

Remind your child that feeling worried or anxious about exams is normal. Nervousness is a natural reaction to exams. The key is to put these nerves to positive use.

Encourage them to think through what they do know and the time they have already put into studying to help them feel more confident. If they seem overwhelmed, please talk to your child's teachers or form tutor.

If your child is feeling anxious, meditation, grabbing a cup of tea, deep breathing or taking a few minutes outside in nature even if only for a couple of minutes, can be beneficial.

## Don't add to the pressure

Before your child goes into school for an exam, be reassuring and positive – try not to add to the pressure. After an exam, if your child feels things didn't go well, try to listen to their concerns, give support and avoid criticism. Talk about the parts that went well rather than focusing on the questions they had difficulties with. Then move on and focus on the next test, rather than dwelling on things that can't be changed.

## Special consideration

If anything happens during the exam period that you think may have an impact on your child whilst doing their exams, please let us know.

## Revision planning: Top tips for parents

- Your child should have a timetable for the period during the exams when they are in school. Ask them to show you this, talk to them about it and ask them how they are going to organise their time outside of school.
- Encourage them to break revision time into small chunks – 30 minutes to one hour-long sessions with breaks at the end of each session often work well. Encourage your child to take regular breaks.
- Make sure your child has all the essential books and materials – see the revision guide summary for help. If you access pupil premium funding, school will be able to help with the purchase of these guides.
- Help your child to condense notes onto postcards to act as revision prompts and use these to test them in quick bursts.
- Ask them questions about what they are learning.
- Go through school notes with your child or listen while they revise a topic.
- Time your child's attempts at practice papers.





# With you every step of the way

## We're here for you...

We're here for you throughout your child's time at school, but particularly throughout the lead up to exams and during the exam period. Please do speak to your child's form teacher in the first instance if you have any questions or concerns.

## Useful links and resources



We've put together a list of online support and resources on our website. Just scan the QR code to have a look.

## NEXT STEPS

### Encourage your child to:

- Create a clear revision plan
- Break revision into small chunks of 30 minutes to one hour-long sessions
- Take regular breaks
- Eat healthily
- Get a good night's sleep
- Exercise regularly
- Socialise with friends and family
- Talk about exam nerves
- Ask for help if they need it