

Dear parent/carer,

I am writing to you to give you another update on our Year 11 cohort, and to share some more information as we move into the formal exam period.

### **Formal exams start next week**

As you will know, the formal exam season starts this coming Monday, 15 May 2023. The exam timetable is published on our [school website](#), and your child will be given their personal exam timetable before the end of this week. It is extremely important that students are in school every day through the exam period, as lessons and revision sessions will continue. On exam days, it is particularly important to arrive to school with plenty of time to spare before the exam, so that students can enter the exam hall calmly and without rushing. This will support them to settle in the exam hall more readily.



### **What can you do as a parent/carer to support?**

Please look at the next two pages of this update letter for some practical tips and advice that you can follow to support your child through the exam season. There is also a wealth of organised revision happening in school, so please encourage your child to make the most of them.

### **In-school revision through exams**

In the run up to exams, and through the exam season, there is no study leave and so students are expected to be in school as normal. There are many revision opportunities happening in school in addition to normal lessons. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Revision in timetabled lessons throughout the school day
- Revision in after-school sessions
- Independent revision in the 5 O'clock room

We are also in the process of organising revision sessions that will take place during the May half-term week, and we will communicate these to students once they have been finalised.

### **Wellbeing support during the exam season**

We understand that the exam season can be a stressful and worrying time for students. In school, there is a wealth of support for students through the exam season; their teachers, advisors, head of year, and the wider pastoral team in school will continue to care for our students. There are also a number of resources online to support students through the exam season. Some excellent support can be found at the following websites:



- [YoungMinds](#) – how to support your child manage exam stress
- [Mind](#) – how to cope with exam stress and where to find support
- [NHS](#) – help your child beat exam stress



### **Good luck!**

I met with all Year 11 students in assembly this morning to wish them the best of luck with their exams, and to give them some last-minute tips for success. Myself and all the staff at Heworth Grange wish all of our Year 11 students the very best as they head into the exam season.

Yours faithfully,



Mr J Hulse  
Deputy Headteacher (Quality of Education)



## What can I do as a parent/carers to support my child?



1. **Ask your child about the revision and independent learning that they are doing each day.** Talk to them about what they have enjoyed, what they have found tough, and what they've been proud to achieve this week.



2. **Help your child with their retrieval activities.** This can be done by quizzing them; asking the questions and checking that their answers include what's written on their flashcards/quiz books. In addition, you can always ask follow-up questions: how? Why? Always?



3. **Reassure your child.** If they are struggling, or not understanding, remind them that their teacher will always be able to help them the day after. They could also ask a question via. ClassCharts.



4. **Don't let your child worry too much about mistakes.** Mistakes are bound to happen, and are all part of a learning process. If they realise that a mistake has been made and can correct it, that's great! Encourage the repetition of the task a couple of days later to check that the repair that they did has stuck.



5. **Provide a good environment to revise.** The environment should be as quiet as possible and free from distractions. Take their phone from them whilst they're revising so that they're not distracted by it.

## Golden rules for revision

1. **Copying notes won't cut it.** The information needs to be converted in some way. E.g., summarised, changed from text into a flowchart, built into a flash card, or applied to an exam-style question.
2. **Revision needs to be spaced out over time, not crammed in at the last minute.** A revision planner can be used to help this. There are some top tips for revision planning overleaf.
3. **Revise without distractions.** That means no mobile phones, no TV, and no music with words (quiet classical/ambient is okay). Place mobiles in another room; check messages etc. during breaks between revision sessions.
4. **Take breaks.** There should be regular breaks scheduled in revision. 20 minutes is a good length of time for a focussed revision session, with short breaks in between each one. The ideal time to check phone messages or make a cup of tea.
5. **Eat and sleep well.** There should be regular breaks scheduled in revision. In addition, eating and drinking as well as possible is important for keeping the energy levels needed to be able to remain focussed during revision sessions.

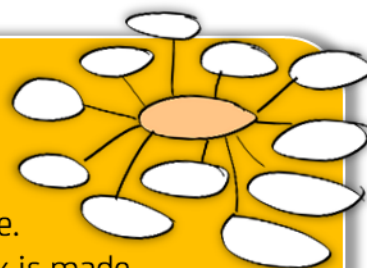


# Brief 'how to' guide: some effective revision strategies

## Mind maps

### *Top tips...*

- Topic title goes in the middle.
- Key words and diagrams are linked around the outside.
- For any linking line that is drawn, explain how the link is made (i.e. how the two words are connected). This could be done verbally, or by writing it down.



## Self-Quizzing

### *Top tips...*

- Topic questions on the left of the page.
- Clear, simple answers on the right.
- Fold in half and quiz, quiz, quiz!
- This can be done solo or with a partner. The more frequently the quiz is re-done, the more likely the answers will begin to stick.



## Flash Cards

### *Top tips...*

- One word/simple phrase/diagram on one side
- Explanation on the other side, no more than two short bullet points
- Flashcards can be revised solo or with a partner.
- Organise the flashcards using the Leitner method (type "Leitner method flashcards" into YouTube for a video). This will help keep things focussed.



## Exam-style questions

### *Top tips...*

- Read each question twice.
- Highlight the command word (usually only *one*), quickly annotate what this tells you to do.
- Quickly note down key words that need to be used next to the question.
- Answer question, stay true to the command word.



## Revision Timetable

### *Top tips...*

- Keep sessions focussed and snappy! Three lots of 20 minutes on different subjects can often be more productive than 1 hour on one subject.
- Plan several 20 minute sessions in during the weeks before an assessment, not just the night before.
- Plan out which topics are going to be revised in each revision slot. E.g. *expanding brackets* rather than just *maths*.

