



'Academic excellence, spiritual development  
and social awareness through Christ.'

**Blessed Robert Sutton  
Catholic Voluntary Academy**

# How to support your child with their revision

**GCSE Revision**

**2021-2022**



**St Ralph  
Sherwin**  
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

# Study Prayer by St. Thomas Aquinas



Creator of all things, true source of light and wisdom, origin of all being, graciously let a ray of your light penetrate the darkness of my understanding.

Take from me the double darkness in which I have been born, an obscurity of sin and ignorance.

Give me a keen understanding, a retentive memory, and the ability to grasp things correctly and fundamentally.

Grant me the talent of being exact in my explanations and the ability to express myself with thoroughness and charm.

Point out the beginning, direct the progress, and help in the completion. I ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

-Saint Thomas Aquinas, O.P.



# What revision should your child be doing?

It has been scientifically proven that pupils who perform better complete a wide range of revision activities for each subject. To prepare themselves for their exams, pupils should ensure that they try as many of the following activities:

<b>Content</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading through class notes</li> <li>• Using resources on Firefly/PiXL App</li> <li>• Making notes from Course Textbooks/Revision Guides</li> <li>• Mind maps / Diagrams</li> <li>• Making / Re-making Class Notes</li> <li>• Highlighting / Colour Coding</li> <li>• Flashcards</li> <li>• Using a Revision Wall to Display their Learning</li> </ul>	<p>In most subjects there will be two years' worth of content to revise. Ensure your child uses a variety of revision strategies to ensure long term memory retention is developed</p>
<b>Skills</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Exam Answers Under Timed Conditions</li> <li>• Reading Model Answers</li> <li>• Using Past Exam Questions &amp; Planning Answers</li> <li>• Marking Your Own Work to a Mark Scheme</li> <li>• Studying Mark Schemes or Examiners Report</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure you and your child are aware of the different exam boards for each subject. Each exam board offers a wide-range of help and past papers to practice.</p>
<b>Feedback</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Other Students in Groups / Pairs</li> <li>• Comparing Model Answers Against Your Own Work</li> <li>• Creating Your Own Exam Questions</li> <li>• Handing in Extra Exam Work for Marking</li> <li>• One to One Discussions with Teachers / Tutors</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure your child regularly attends intervention sessions and encourage them to complete independent revision and exam questions.</p>



# What can I do to help my child?

Revision Strategy	What is it?	How can I help?
<b>Cognitive Load</b>	<p>Cognitive load is the amount of memory our brain can hold at any one time. The capacity of our working load is limited and therefore students can maximise their working memory by practising a range of strategies. Research shows that strategies for reducing cognitive load can assist the human brain to learn and store knowledge, boost confidence and improve memory retention.</p>	<p>The learning environment is crucial to reducing cognitive load. Help your child to create a calming environment to work in with as few distractions as possible. Encourage them to turn off their phone, music or the TV whilst revising or doing homework. Distractions only add to our working memory.</p>
<b>Exercise</b>	<p>Exercise triggers the release of various hormones and chemical compounds in the body and has many benefits to learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It improves cognitive brain function</li> <li>• It improves students' ability to focus for longer periods of time</li> <li>• It can reduce stress levels</li> <li>• It can improve memory retention</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure your child takes breaks every 60-90 minutes when revising. Work with them to help them work efficiently and find a routine that works for them. They need to be flexible to work around their timetables and could exercise early in the morning, at lunchtimes or early evenings. Alongside exercising, help your child to take care of themselves by eating well, sleeping well, relaxing, socialising and having some down time.</p>
<b>Flashcards</b>	<p>Research shows that using flashcards can enhance long-term learning and help students to memorise facts quickly.</p>	<p>Flashcards should have a question or key term on one side and the answer on the other. Suggest using different colours for different topics. Try testing them and keep repeating for long term memory retention.</p>
<b>Interleaving</b>	<p>Watch this video with your child to understand more about how interleaving works - <a href="https://youtu.be/WbDpYmp8F6o">https://youtu.be/WbDpYmp8F6o</a></p>	<p>Help your child to decide on the key topics they need to learn for each subject. Work with your child to create a revision timetable which spaces their topics out across a good period of time. Short bursts of revision are more effective than long sessions so encourage your child to mix topics up and do little and often as quality is better than quantity. Encourage them to take regular breaks in their revision and not to focus on the same topic for a whole day!</p>



<p><b>Spacing</b></p>	<p>Spacing is a revision technique which is all about spacing revision so students don't get swamped and overwhelmed. It means introducing time intervals into their revision sessions as well as spacing out the days on which they revise for topics.</p> <p>Research shows that doing something little and often is better than doing it at once or cramming. For example, revising for eight hours in one day is not as effective as doing one hour of revision for eight days. This is because the time in between revising allows students to forget and re-learn the information, which cements it in their long-term memory.</p>	<p>Encourage them to review information using different revision techniques to help them carry out some 5-10-minute reviews of topics, such as reading through notes, highlighting information or making post-it notes. Students can also transform their learning by doing 30-minute activities, such as writing summary sheets, flash cards or mind maps for topics.</p>
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**\*If you are worried about your child's mental health please contact school\***

## Dealing with Exam Stress



The exam season can be a stressful time for all involved. The NHS advises parents to watch out for the following signs:

- Worry a lot
- Feel tense
- Get lots of headaches and stomach pains
- Not sleep well
- Be irritable
- Lose interest in food or eat more than normal
- Not enjoy activities they previously enjoyed
- Seem negative and low in their mood
- Seem hopeless about the future

You can do the following to help:

- Help them to study using the mentioned revision strategies
- Encourage them to talk to a member of school staff who they feel is supportive
- Make sure they eat a balanced diet and get plenty of exercise
- Try to ensure they get 8-10 hours of sleep each evening
- Talk about exam nerves
- Make time for rewards

### Other useful websites:

<https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/support>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/coping-with-exam-stress/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/your-stories/14-ways-to-beat-exam-stress/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work/school-college/exam-stress/>



# Two week revision timetable

## Week 1

	8:00-10:00	10:00-12:00	12:00-14:00	14:00-16:00	16:00-18:00	18:00-20:00
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

## Week 2

	8:00-10:00	10:00-12:00	12:00-14:00	14:00-16:00	16:00-18:00	18:00-20:00
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						



# Discuss the following strategies:



Three common revision techniques that are **LEAST** effective in helping you revise are:

- Highlighting texts
- Re-reading
- Summarising text



Whilst these methods may feel like you are revising, there are many better methods to help you revise.

## Flashcards


Simply create with questions on side and answers on the other side. You can colour code for specific topics and quiz yourself or others.



Post its can be also useful for key words and timelines

## Using Flashcards

Using the Leitner Method, using the video below <https://youtu.be/C20EvKtdJwQ>  YouTube

You can also create excellent flashcards online or on your phone using Quizlet which also had an app. 

## Retrieval Practice

Testing what you know is a powerful tool in revision, the effort to remember something really strengthens your memory

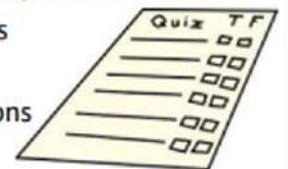
Apps such as Memrise and Quizlet allow you to use or create your own quizzes based on topics.

Create them, test yourself or get someone to test you, it's works!

## Types

There are a number of types you can create:

- Multiple Choice Questions
- True or False
- Short Explanation Questions
- Odd One Out
- If this is the answer then what is the question

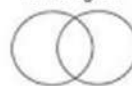


## Transform It

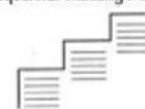
Graphic organisers are a great way of 'transforming' your notes/information into visual revision topics.

They can be used to create links, show a narrative, identify the causes/consequences and importance of something.

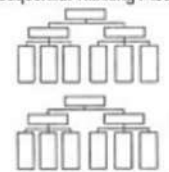
Venn Diagram



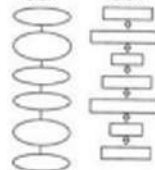
Sequential Thinking Model



Sequential Thinking Model



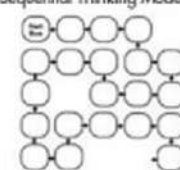
Chain



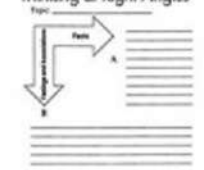
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Sequential Thinking Model



Thinking at Right Angles



Spider Map



Web



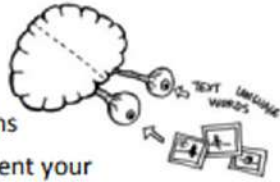
Mind Map



# Discuss the following strategies:

## How to:

1. Use simple drawings with matching simple descriptions
2. The drawing should represent your understanding of the topic
3. Try to draw links between images



## Dual Coding

Dual coding' is the method of putting your knowledge into visual form alongside words. It increases the chances of you remembering it.



An example activity you can do is creating a comic strip

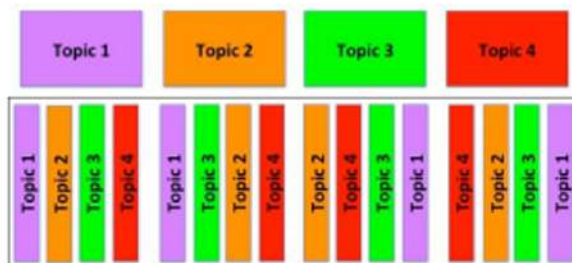
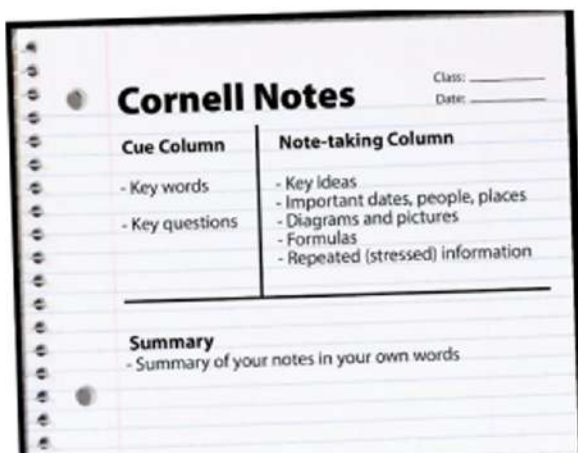


## The Cornell Method

This method can be used in your revision books as a great method to get you to 'think' about your revision. Simply split your page into 3 sections as shown on the diagram on the left:



- Note Taking
- Cues
- Summary



## Interleaving and Spacing

Don't revise your all topics in one go (cramming), you should revise 'chunks' of a topic for small amounts of time (15 minutes) and then move onto another 'chunk' from a different topic. This will improve your memory!

## The basics

Simply, make sure you eat, sleep and take time out!



Limit distractions



Find a nice space to revise in



The more you put in the more you get out!



Create and use a revision planner



Set an alarm and start early!



Revise, Repeat, Remember

