

Route map to GCSE success

Key staff

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Key dates

Event	Date
Yr11 Welcome Event	Monday 13 th September
6 th Form Open Evening for Year 11	Tuesday 12 th October
Progress Report	w/c 18 th October
Yr11 Practical mock exams	w/c 13 th December
Yr11 Mock exams	w/c 3 rd January
Yr11 Mock Results Event	Monday 7 th February
Year 11 Virtual Parents' Evening	Thursday 10 th February
Year 11 into 12 day (6 th Form College)	Friday 11 th February
Progress Report	w/c 28 th March
Year 11 Finishing in Style Event	Tuesday 29 th March
Year 11 Rewards Evening	Thursday 31 st March
Year 11 Prom (provisional)	Friday 1 st July

A study demonstrated that “the effect of parental engagement over a student's school career is equivalent to adding two or three years to that student's education.” When parents and teachers work together to improve learning, the gains in achievement are significant”

Outline of key dates

September

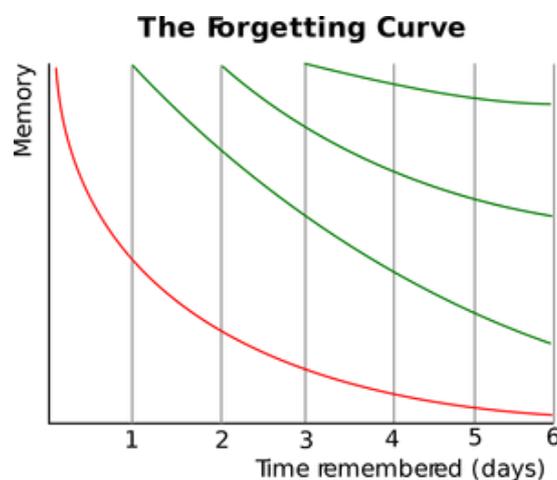
- During the first few weeks of term the initial emphasis in your child's lessons will be on formative assessment and interleaving and retrieval testing. All subject areas will include retrieval tasks at the beginning of each lesson to revisit prior learning.

Why are retrieval and interleaving important?

The act of getting learners to retrieve information from memory as a way to develop more effective learning is a 'desirable difficulty'. The idea of having to retrieve, as opposed to reread or review prior learning, requires the brain to work harder. Because it's harder, the storage and retrieval strength for this learning is improved.

Interleaving is a learning strategy that involves switching between topics and ideas, which has been shown to improve long-term learning relative to blocking study of the same idea or topic

"Each time 'to-be-learned' material is revisited by retrieving it from memory, the knowledge of the material is brought back up to 100%, with the recollection of that material being strengthened such that the forgetting of the material is slowed".



The Dunlosky Review

Students therefore need to start revision early so that they have time to revisit and consolidate their learning!

- Every class has a **google classroom** where resources are posted weekly. Your child can access the resources for additional support or revision purposes or if they miss any lessons.
- Each department has an appropriate curriculum plan to match the school Assessment, Recording and Reporting calendar. All subjects assess students to identify and address gaps in students' learning and to best secure key concepts to ensure progression through the curriculum for all students. Formative feedback takes place in KS4 twice a half-term for all subjects.
- **Student learning checklists (SLCs)**

We have introduced **SLCs** this year as a way for students to check their knowledge and progress and learning against a set of required skills and tasks for each subject. These are broken down per topics and unit for ease. They are available for students to access on the relevant subject google classroom.

Students should review these regularly throughout the term to ensure that they are on track with their learning and that there are no gaps. They will also be able to access SLCs for units and topics studied in Yr10 shortly. These will also be accessible via Google Classroom.

Below you can see some examples of Student Learning Checklists (SLCs) that your child will receive.

Student Learning Checklist

Key Stage 4

Subject: English Literature	Unit Title: Paper 2 Section A (<i>An Inspector Calls</i>)
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Section 1	Knowledge & Understanding – ‘What you need to know and understand’	Confident	Need to Practice	Need More Help
	Format of the paper			
	Question format: marks available, timings, AOs, response required – length and quality			
	Knowledge of the text (narrative, characters, themes, etc.)			
	Biographical and historical context relating to 1912 and 1945			
Section 2	Skills – ‘What you will need to show to be successful in your pathway/meeting your targets’	Confident	Need to Practice	Need More Help
	Write a detailed response to the task and whole text			
	Demonstrate a full understanding of the text			
	Include a range of quotations and textual references			
	Explore and analyse the writers’ methods			
	Use subject terminology			
	Explore the writers’ intentions			
	Embed relevant contextual detail in your answer to effectively support your analysis			
Section 3	Tasks to Complete – ‘What you will do in lessons/homework’	Complete	Partially Complete	Significant Gaps
	Explore relevant contextual information			
	Read the full text			
	Read and analyse extracts from the text			
	Answer questions about sections of the texts			
	Plan responses to questions similar to those that will be given on the exam			
	Complete extended exam-style responses			
	Self and peer assess pieces of work using criteria from the mark scheme			
	Complete low-stakes quizzes for retrieval practice			
Section 4	Assessments – ‘How work and understanding will be assessed’	Complete	Partially Complete	Significant Gaps
	Assessment 1 – Characterisation of Arthur Birling in Act 1			
	Assessment 2 – Theme of social responsibility across the whole text			

Student Learning Checklist

Key Stage 4

Subject: History	Unit Title: America 1920-73
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Section 1	Knowledge & Understanding – ‘What you need to know and understand’	Confident	Need to Practice	Need More Help
	The structure of the exam paper			
	Question format: marks available, timings, focus, response required – length and quality			
	How to plan my responses			
	The chronology of the period 1920-73			
Section 2	Skills – ‘What you will need to show to be successful in your pathway/meeting your targets’	Confident	Need to Practice	Need More Help
	Use the content of the interpretations to assess their meaning			
	Use the provenance of the interpretations to compare why the authors say what they do			
	Link knowledge to the interpretations to assess which is most convincing			
	Link factors back to the question being asked			
	Explain how different groups in society were affected by changes over time			
	Compare two factors and reach a conclusion			
	Include relevant and specific evidence in all answers			
Section 3	Tasks to Complete – ‘What you will do in lessons/homework’	Complete	Partially Complete	Significant Gaps
	Investigate the reasons for the economic boom			
	Explain the role of Henry Ford and mass production in the boom			
	Investigate changes to popular culture – cinema, music, sports			
	Describe the benefits and negatives of the stock market			
	Assess the changes and continuity for women in the 1920s			
	Explore the immigrant experience with focus on Sacco and Vanzetti			
	Explain why there was a ‘Red Scare’ in the 1920s			
	Explore the position of African-Americans in the 1920s linked to the Ku Klux Klan			
	Explain why the Wall Street Crash happened			
	Investigate the impact of the Great Depression			
	Explain why Roosevelt beat Hoover in the 1932 election			

October – December

- **‘How to...’ videos** will be shared with students via Google classroom for each subject area.

These videos will support students with their revision and preparation for mock exams, including how to approach exam style questions. Subject experts will walk the students through exam papers and explain what students will need to do to excel in each subject area.

- **Revision sessions** will begin in school to further support students with mock exam preparation. These sessions will focus on the application of knowledge and not the re-teaching of content. Students will be provided with a timetable later this term.
- Detailed **subject overviews** are available on the school website for each subject area under KS4 curriculum. These provide a breakdown of exams, topics, timings, useful revision tips, resources and websites that students can access for additional support.
- Practical mock exams will take place before Christmas

Mock examinations will test students on all content covered to date. It will help provide a fully comprehensive picture of where students are up to in January.

January

- Students will sit mock examination papers in all subjects
- Marking of mocks, feedback to students and preparation for Parents' Evening (Thursday 10th February)

February

- Year 11 Parents' Evening
- Internal coursework deadline - February half term. This will allow us time to implement additional support for your child.
- Feed forward strategy – this will take students from mocks to their summer exams. All departments write a 23-point plan to ensure that we guide and support all pupils towards their final external GCSE exams.

Countdown to exams March - June

- Easter revision sessions
- Interventions
- Countdown to prom

How can I support my child in the lead up to their exams?

'When children's parents are engaged in school life, then children pick up on it. They think, "School is important. My parents think it's important," and that increases their attachment to education, which translates into better achievement'

Key strategies

1) RAG rate subjects

Start a conversation with your child about the subjects they study. You can use the Yr10 mock data as a starting point to rank the subjects according to where they need to prioritise revision.

- Is your child confident that they can perform well in next summer's exams?
- Are they confident that they have understood and remembered the subject knowledge they have studied?
- Do they feel confident that they have the skills required to answer exam questions with confidence?

Use the template on the next page to support the conversation with your child.

RED – The subjects that they find most challenging and will require the most work and support to reach their OPT

AMBER- The subjects where they underperformed in the mocks but they have a clear understanding of next steps and are confident in taking them

GREEN- The subjects that they find least challenging and are 'on track' to achieve their OPT or higher

Subject	Mock grade	RED	AMBER	GREEN
Maths				
English				
Science				
Option 1				
Option 2				
Option 3				
Option 4				

2) Flashcards & self- quizzing



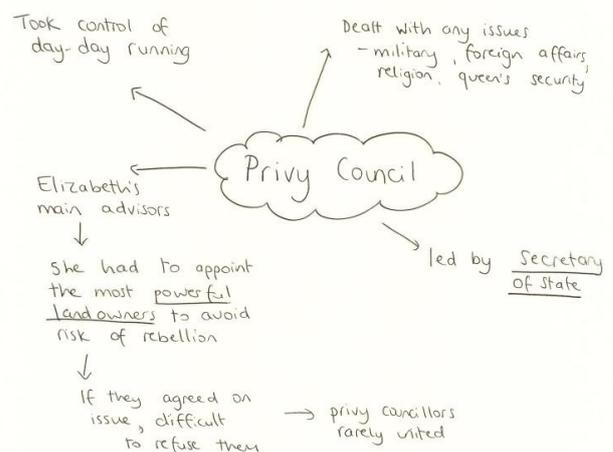
- Help your child to make flashcards with the information they need to learn for their knowledge retrieval test.
- Keep information on cards brief and to the point. Try to include pictures or diagrams to jog their memory.
- Put the question or a prompt on one side and the information they need to remember on the other or put a word on one side and a definition on the other.

Examples:

Elizabethan England

Privy Council

- ① What did they control?
- ② What issues did they deal with?
- ③ Who did she need to appoint & why?
- ④ Who led the council?



Key themes in An Inspector Calls (4)

Responsibility - individual & collective within society; Priestley believed social responsibility - work together not against each other.

Gender - start of play presents stereotypical view that women are the weaker sex; power struggle between genders.

Class/Power/Wealth/Status - early 20th century class divide. Priestley wanted to bridge the gap between upper and lower classes; upper owned most of the land and had most money. Priestley wanted fairer social world rather than Capitalist, selfish; wanted to expose immorality of the elite.

Generations - older are set in ways, progressive younger generation are able to change.

DESERTIFICATION

- WHAT IS IT?
- CAUSES? (5)

→ THE TURNING OF SEMI-ARID AREAS (OR DRYLANDS) INTO DESERTS

→ CAUSES

CLIMATE CHANGE
- REDUCE RAINFALL
- RISING TEMPS
= LESS WATER FOR PLANTS

FUEL WOOD
- PEOPLE RELY ON IT
- REMOVAL OF TREES CAUSES SOIL TO BE EXPOSED

OVER-CULTIVATION
- CROPS GROWN IN SAME AREA TOO OFTEN
- NUTRIENTS USED UP
- CAUSES SOIL EROSION

POPULATION GROWTH
- PUTS PRESSURE ON LAND
- LEADS TO MORE DEFORESTATION
OVERGRAZING + OVERCULTIVATION

OVERGRAZING
- TOO MANY ANIM
- PLANTS EATEN FASTER THAN THEY CAN GROW BACK
- CAUSES SOIL EROSION

- Look at the flashcards and read aloud a few times. Then, look at the question / definition and try to remember the answer / description
- Shuffle the cards and do it again a couple of times.
- Now, try to look at the answer / description and try to remember the question / definition
- Shuffle the cards and do it again a couple of times.

- Put the cards that they know very well aside.
- Concentrate on the cards that they find harder. Write the information out several times using the look, cover, write, check method and then give them another go!

Research about study tells us that one of the most effective techniques for revision is to self-test. We know that this is what the most successful students do!

Self- quizzing requires you to recall information from memory. This not only highlights what they do or don't know, but also strengthens their ability to recall that information.

There are many ways to test knowledge:

- Turn over the flashcard and write down as much from memory as accurately as possible. Then flip and check the accuracy of what is written down. Use a different coloured pen to correct any errors and fill in any gaps.
- Make quizzes and tests to complete the next day or 2 days later to check how much they can remember.
- Encourage your child to create quizzes for their friends and swap
- Create a quiz based on the information your child needs to learn or encourage other family members to help out!

Push beyond “One and Done”

“While the brain is not a muscle that gets stronger with exercise, the neural pathways that make up a body of learning do get stronger, when the memory is retrieved and the learning is practised. Periodic practice arrests forgetting, strengthens retrieval routes, and is essential for hanging onto the knowledge you want to gain.”

Brown et al., *Make It Stick*, p.3.

Additional ways to support your child to have a positive learning experience

Learning at home with parents enables children to achieve more. When children talk openly with their parents about their day at school and other things, they will achieve more educationally than those who don't (Daniel, 2015).

A recent study identified key characteristics commonly associated with students who made good or accelerated progress during secondary school. We have summarised these characteristics into the following tips.

1. Get focused

Think!



- Am I organised?
- Am I conscientious?
- Am I determined to succeed?
- Am I concentrating when working at home or in school?
- Willing to go the extra mile

These are all important characteristics as they form the foundation for many students who make great progress!

How might you help your child?

- Use training in sport, practice and rehearsal in dance and music to demonstrate how focus and determination lead to improvement and success.
- Support with homework planning and provide incentives (and snacks!)

2. Accept and enjoy the challenge

Think!



- How do I react when I am asked to do something harder than usual?
- Am I prepared to work outside my 'comfort zone'?
- Will I sometimes take the harder option when given a choice?

Learning is rarely straightforward and so your son/daughter will come up against obstacles and difficulties.

How might you help your child?

- If your son/daughter describes their work as 'boring' or 'easy', encourage them to ask their teacher for something more challenging to try.
- Show your son/daughter how you enjoy a challenge by completing puzzles, crosswords or Sudoku together or do something different together – visit a gallery or museum, see a film or read a book - **then talk about it!**

3. Build on your strengths, work on your weaknesses

Think!



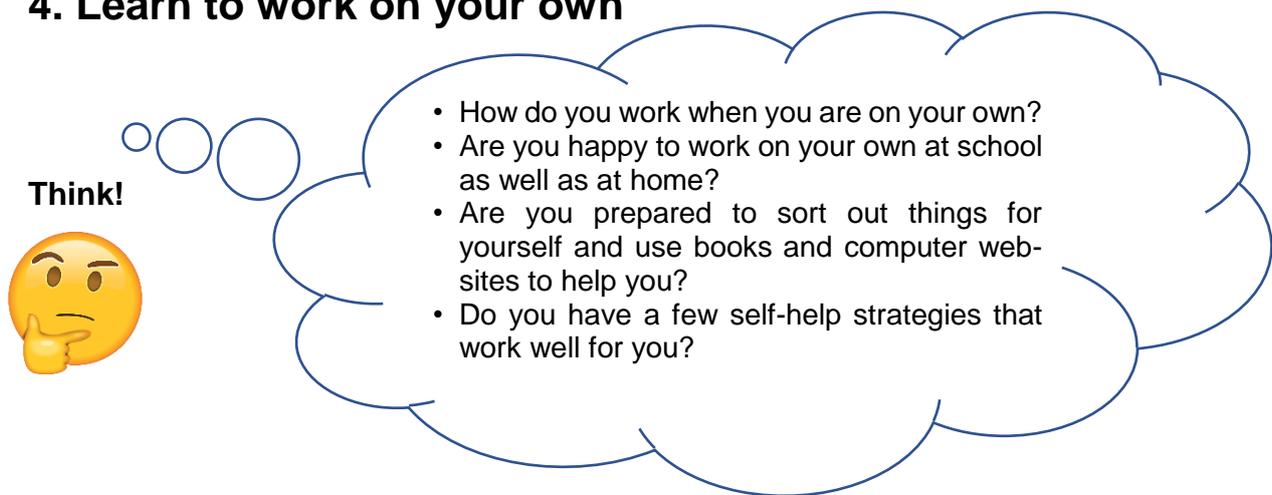
- How often do you reflect on your work?
- How often do you pin-point the things you need to work more on?
- How often do you tackle some of the harder pieces of work when you are fresh rather than

Your son/daughter knows probably better than anyone what he/she can do well and what is more difficult. Being honest and realistic about strengths and weaknesses is a key part of the learning process.

How might you help your child?

- Encourage your son/daughter to talk to you about the topics he/she finds difficult in different subjects.
- Help him/her to use the textbook and class notes for support and encourage your son/daughter to talk to their teacher as he/she will also want to help.

4. Learn to work on your own



Sometimes students just need to spend some time on their own to see if they can 'get their head round' what they are doing. They also need to know what to do if they get stuck.

How might you help your child?

- Encourage your son/daughter to make use of resources at school, e.g. from the department, library, website or learning resource centre
- Buy or borrow the revision guides the school recommends.
- Encourage re-visiting of lesson notes and re-reading of set texts.

5. Get the most out of working with others

Think!



- How do you get on when you are working with a group?
- Do you listen and make contributions?
- Do you try out your ideas and understanding on your friends and compare their approaches with your own?

Learning is often much more productive when you do it with others. Talking about ideas and comparing approaches can really help to improve understanding.

How might you help your child?

- If your son/daughter socialises with friends at home, encourage him/her to spend some time talking through homework together.
- Get your son/daughter to talk you through a piece of work, particularly if he/she is finding it challenging.

6. Stay positive – don't give up

Think!



- How do you react when your results are not as good as you'd expected them to be?
- If you don't achieve your targets this term how do you feel about next term's targets?
- How good are you at pulling yourself out of a bad patch?

Being resilient is really important. There will be times when things are just not working in certain subjects. Overcoming these difficulties can really motivate your son/daughter and help him/her to make even more progress in the future.

How might you help your child?

- Try to refocus your son/daughter on their longer term goals and targets and help him/her to identify the things to do to achieve these.
- Talk to you son/daughter about whether he/she need support from others to get back on track, e.g. their teacher or a learning mentor.
- Encourage your son/daughter to review his/her progress with you.

7. Be ambitious for the future

Think!



- What are your hopes and ambitions for the future?
- Do you have any idea of what you would like to do when you leave school?
- What qualifications are you likely to need to follow this aspiration?
- How far do you feel you are on track to achieve your aim?

Many students are motivated by career aspirations. Your son/daughter doesn't need to have a definite career in mind but it can be helpful to have some idea of what work in school might be leading to and whether he/she is on track to achieve his/her aim.

How might you help your child?

- Support your son/daughter in finding out about the qualifications needed to achieve his/her hopes and ambitions for the future.
- Encourage him/her to aim high – by trying to exceed the qualifications to keep options open.
- Talk to your son/daughter about your own career or the careers of other family members or friends.

8. Try and develop as many talents and interests as possible

Think!



- What do you like to do when you are not at school?
- Do you commit quality time to developing your talents or interests?
- Do you participate in any extra-curricular activities linked to the school?

Many students have talents and interests, such as those associated with music or sport. Committing time and energy to these can often have positive spin offs for other work in school. Extra-curricular activities can help to develop confidence, organisational skills, self-discipline and good communication skills.

How might you help your child?

- Encourage your son/daughter to continue with his/her interests or develop new ones.
- Encourage your son/daughter to participate in clubs or activities offered by the school.