



THE HOLLINS

Introduction to Key Stage 4 Parent Information

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National Teaching School
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Teaching & Leadership

Maths

The key thing in supporting your child in their maths at KS4 is to take an interest in what they are doing and to reinforce the importance of gaining their GCSE in maths.

Actually helping your child with the content at this stage can be difficult, especially if you lack confidence in maths yourself. This shouldn't deter you from having conversations with your child though, as they have plenty of resources to use to improve their own knowledge independently.

Homework may take some time at this stage, especially on problem solving type questions. Here you need to encourage your child not to give up, show all of their working and make progress towards gaining the final answer. Their skills at this will increase over time.

Encouraging your child to discuss what they are learning in maths is essential if we are to create resilient learners who are capable of overcoming being stuck on a question in an exam situation.

There are a number of ways you can look to do this:-

- Ask your child to teach you what they learned in class today.
- If your child is struggling with a topic encourage them to look for hints and tips online.
- Make sure that your child checks back in their yellow book at their notes to help with their understanding.
- Periodically ask them to revise from their red formula book.
- Reinforce the idea that being 'stuck' is no bad thing. Suggest that your child checks out one of the lessons on MyMaths to help them work past this.
- Worded questions may require your child to unpick a question, let them talk their thinking through with you when tackling this.
- Try to complete some worded problems together (the NRICH website is particularly good for short, puzzle type questions).

Useful websites:

www.mymaths.co.uk Login – Hollins Password - angle

www.mrbartonmaths

<https://nrich.maths.org>

www.aqa.org.uk

www.bbcbitessize



Remember to search YouTube for short videos on how to complete questions on different topic areas.



What is different about my child's English GCSE this year from what has gone on before?

Firstly, there is no more coursework in English. There will be two exams for each of their GCSEs (Language and Literature), which total over 8 hours. There will be no texts allowed in the exams, so your child will be relying on memory to be able to quote from the poem, play or novel. Lastly, your child is having to study more texts than students have had to study in past years.

What difference will that make for my child?

Revision skills are going to be vital to your child's success. In English, we are starting now to develop those skills, so that when your child comes to "start revising" for their exams, he or she will know how they learn and what strategies work best.

How important is spelling and punctuation?

It forms 20% of the marks available for English Language, and it is even 5% of the Literature GCSE. In fact, it is worth around 5% of quite a lot of subjects now, so as you can see it is vitally important that your child is getting the basics right, all the time, in every subject. If your child needs a little extra help in this area, there are apps such as *Miss Spell's Class* and *SAT Vocab-MindSnacks* that will be for older children dealing with challenging vocabulary. *Killer SAT Grammar*, although it is American, is an excellent free app. There are a number of websites as well that both explain rules and provide practice for students.

Where can I find further revision resources?

The exam board that we use is Eduqas, and revision guides or even York notes are always helpful. In addition, there are some excellent revision video's on YouTube and other areas, including the excellent Mr. Bruff revision series.

What type of homework my child will get in English?

We have provided all year 10 students with a revision booklet for their reference, which has specific ways of revising. We will set homework *at least* once a week, and may refer them to a page in their booklet for instructions. The goal is for students to learn these skills, and also to develop the habit of regular revision. It is therefore imperative that it is done on time, or it defeats the purpose.

How can I support my child?

If your child has a daily habit of checking Show My Homework and a quiet space in which to revise, you have all made a great start. Your child will need a timer for some exercises they are set. Other things your child may need, depending on personality and revision style preferences, may be things like cards, coloured pens, post-it notes, and highlighters. Access to the internet is also a plus. If this is an issue at home or if you have chosen to limit your child's computer time, there is homework club in school, both at lunch times and after school, where there will be internet access. At home, encourage your child to watch the news and stay abreast of current affairs.

Where can I find further revision resources?

The exam board that we use is Eduqas, and revision guides or even York notes are always helpful. The texts your child will be studying are: Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, J. B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls*, as well as a variety of poetry dating from the 18th century onwards. In addition, there are some excellent revision video's on YouTube and other areas, including the excellent Mr. Bruff revision series. Revision groups are often helpful as well, and I understand some enterprising year 10s have already set these up!

Hollins' Handy Hints for Parents:

1. Do not underestimate the influence that you, as a parent or carer, have on your child's education and learning. You are THE most influential person in their lives and they will take their lead from you when it comes to education. Be careful with what you say!
2. Encourage resilience in your child: resilience is the ability to keep trying even when the going gets tough. The best way of encouraging it is by modelling it for them.
3. Do not accept your child saying "I don't know". We do not accept this at The Hollins – it is a lazy answer and shows a lack of resilience!
4. Be positive about their mistakes — they are proof that your child is trying. Have a conversation with them about what they can learn from the mistake, and then move on.
5. Remove electronic devices (iPads, phones, TV, games consoles, etc.) before they start doing homework. Research suggests that those students who were allowed access to their devices during school work performed on average worse than those who were banned from using their devices.
6. Look through their exercise books and talk to them about the work they have been doing in class. Encouraging them to talk about their learning is helping them repeat the work (which helps them remember the information), and it's also helping develop their speaking and listening skills. Looking through their books will also allow you to see the teacher's marking and get a gist of how your child can make more progress.
7. Instead of asking them how their day was, ask specific questions to help them refocus on their day – five different lessons a day can become a bit of a blur! So for example you could ask them:
 - What was the most/least interesting thing you learnt today?
 - How would you rate your day on a scale of 1 to 10? Why?
 - If you could go back and do today again, what would you change?
8. Regularly log on to Show My Homework. This allows you to check what homework your child has been set, and any submissions of previous homework. This will enable you to step in immediately if you notice non-submissions of their work.
9. Do not think that you have to be the expert in all of your child's subject areas. Instead, if they ask you a question about a certain subject or topic, then encourage them to be independent in finding the answer. So you could ask them where they might start trying to find out. Their exercise book is the most obvious place to start, followed by any links or attachments on Show My Homework.

