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## Introduction

It is not unusual for students and their parents/carers to find the exam period and the time leading up to it daunting. Feelings of trepidation and anxiety are common at this time. Exams are an inevitable part of school life and we want to help make this time as stress-free as possible. This guide may help you to help your child through this time.

You do not have to be an educational expert to help your child and life does not need to stop - just change - for a short time.

We hope to answer some commonly asked questions however if you have a question which we do not answer then please ask it of us. Some useful contact details can be found later in this booklet.

## Exam Times

Exams take place during May and June.

A morning exam starts at 8.45am and an afternoon exam starts at 1.00pm

Students will receive a personalised exam timetable which informs them when their exams are. A generic timetable can also be found in the Exams section of our website: [www.mardenhigh.net](http://www.mardenhigh.net)

There are no exams during the half term holiday at the end of May and some "time off" is good, however, school will be open for revision sessions and revision at home is essential. Please allow time for this revision and if possible plan your activities around it.

## What can you do to help?

- Recognise the importance of these exams and how much study time they will require
- If possible avoid giving your child too many chores - allow them that time to revise
- Help your child to get organised with a revision plan
- Create a quiet place to study where work can be safely left
- Make sure your child has everything they need to revise well
- If possible keep noise and disturbance to a minimum
- Encourage a healthy balanced lifestyle which includes time to relax
- Offer praise and encouragement and ask how things are going
- Encourage your child to move on after each exam and not dwell on what has past
- Remind them this is short term and the exams will come to an end

## Preparing for Exams

School provides the expertise and resources which will help your child acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to do well in their subjects. You can help by ensuring your child attends school as much as possible so they are with us to learn the content of the subject. If





your child is not able to attend school please ensure they catch up on missed work so they have the information they need when revising.

Ensure your child has everything they need to revise. Check they have all of the notes and texts required to support their revision. If they are missing anything encourage them to speak to their teacher. Refer to the “Useful Revision Resources” table later in this booklet for more information.

Provide your child with the equipment they need to aid their revision and keep it stocked throughout this time. An argument over a misplaced pen is not worth the upset. The following items will come in useful:

- Pens and pencils
- Highlighter pens
- Coloured pens
- Scientific calculator
- Post-it notes
- Notebooks, paper, index cards
- Access to a computer and printer
- Folders and files
- Past exam papers

Your child will be doing a lot of their revision at home so it is especially important that they are given the space and time to revise. We appreciate that this can be difficult as normal life still goes on. As a minimum your child will need a quiet, preferably private place, to study. A desk and chair in a bedroom is good but a dining table works just as well. The work space needs to be big enough for all their books and equipment. Your child will probably need access to a computer and printer and you may want to provide a lamp and clock.

In a busy home quiet time is sometimes difficult to find. It will really encourage your child to settle into their revision, especially if they are not able to study in a private room, if everyone helps to create a quiet space. Maybe you could encourage everyone to have some quiet time reading, doing homework, catching up on emails or browsing the internet.

Some low level background music may help your child to concentrate but too much will be a distraction and affect the amount of information they are taking in.

## **Revision Time**

Revision is essential - organised revision is even better.

It sounds obvious but don't let your child leave their revision until the last minute. Last minute “cramming” isn't effective and causes stress. A well thought out revision plan will help organise time and provide a framework to focus the mind. Of course no-one would suggest that your child spends all of their time revising however they should know that the best results are achieved when time and effort are invested.





If your child starts their revision well in advance of their exams they are more likely to feel confident and prepared for their exams. They can then devote more time to topics they have found more challenging.

Check whether your child has a revision plan in place and if not offer to help them create one. Remember to include time off from revision and important events such as birthdays. So, how much time should be spent revising? Every child is different but the following guidelines may help:

- 2 to 3 hours of revision per night over four school nights and,
- 5 to 6 hours over the weekend

20 to 30 minute sessions with a short break between each session are most effective but it will depend on the individual on what works best. Regular breaks of 5 to 10 minutes will relax your child and help them digest the information. It's worth revising a few specific topics at a time for each subject and going over the main points several times. Encourage your child to review each topic they've revised 48 hours after their first revision session and then again a week later, a month later, the following month and just before their exam.

It may help to divide each day into three sections:

- On a school day; 1 section for school, 1 section for revision and 1 section for relaxation
- On a non-school day; 2 sections for revision and 1 section for relaxation

The format of a revision plan is down to personal choice but it will need to be rigid enough to focus the mind whilst being flexible enough to change as your child moves closer to their exams. The following examples may help:

Weekly Plan Example 1:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday		Saturday	Sunday
<b>Lunch</b>	Graphics folder		Maths			Time 11-12	Exam practice History	PE
<b>After school</b>			History (1 hour)	Science (1 hour)		Time 1-2	Science SAM learning	Hockey practice
<b>Home</b>	Science (30 mins) Eng Lit (30 mins)	PE (30 mins) Maths (30 mins)	Geography (30 mins)	Eng Lit (30 mins) French (30 mins)	Going out!	Time 3-4	Going out!	Geography case studies





Weekly Plan Example 2:

	8.45am-3.15pm	3.15-4.15pm	5-6pm	6-7pm	7-8pm
<b>Monday</b>	School	Revision class in school	Tea	Keep Fit Class	Chemistry
<b>Tuesday</b>	School	Time off	Tea	Review Notes & Biology	Media Studies
<b>Wednesday</b>	School	Revision class in school	Tea	Review Notes & English	Time off
<b>Thursday</b>	School	Revision class in school	Tea	Maths	English
<b>Friday</b>	School	Time off	Tea	Night off	Night off
	<b>9-10.30am</b>	<b>2-3pm</b>	<b>5-6pm</b>	<b>7-8pm</b>	
<b>Saturday</b>	Review Notes & French	History	Time off	Physics	Time off
<b>Sunday</b>	Review Notes & Geography	Review Notes & Geography	Swimming Class	Time off	Time off

Monthly Plan Example:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
2 C1 - 3 x 20 mins B1 - 2 x 20 mins Training - 2 hours	3 C1 - 3 x 20 mins B1 - 2 x 20 mins Training - 2 hours	4 C1 - 2 x 20 mins B1 - 3 x 20 mins	5 B1 - 3 x 20 mins P1 - 2 x 20 mins Training - 2 hours	6 B1 exam Presentation Eve	7 P1 - 3 x 20 mins C1 - 2 x 20 mins	8 C1 - 3 x 20 mins Maths - 30 mins Match 3 hours
9 C1 - 3 x 20 mins P1 - 2 x 20 mins	10 C1 exam P1 - 3 x 20 mins English - 30 mins Training - 2 hours	11 Maths Deadline P1 - 3 x 20 mins	12 P1 exam English 2 x 30 mins Training - 2 hours	13 English Deadline Friends Birthday	14 Art - 2 hours	15 Tech - 2 hours Match 3 hours
16 Maths - 3 x 20mins	17 Maths - 2 x 30 mins Training - 2 hours	18 Art - 2 hours Maths Deadline	19 Tech - 2 hours Training - 2 hours	20 Art Deadline Tech Deadline	21 Family Day Out	22 English 2 x 30 mins Match 3 hours
23 Maths - 3 x 20 mins	24 Maths - 2 x 30 mins Training - 2 hours	25 Mums Birthday Meal Maths Deadline English 2 x 20 mins	26 English 2 x 30 mins Training - 2 hours	27 English Deadline	28	29 Match 3 hours
30						





Reading is generally not enough; making brief notes, charts and maps helps them remember. It may also be helpful for your child to revise with a friend so they can go over key facts together, test each other's understanding and provide support to each other.

Your child may appreciate your input in testing them or allowing them to explain key information to you or with the timing of a practice paper. Past exam papers are a great source of relevant questions.

A shared break together may be all that is needed.

### **During the Exam Period**

It is very important that your child is not only well prepared for their exams but also healthy and happy during their exams.

Encourage your child to eat healthily during revision and exams. Have plenty of healthy snacks in the fridge and provide healthy, nutritious food at regular intervals. Fresh fruit and vegetables are ideal, especially brain boosting food such as bananas. At family meal times encourage your child to take a break from revision and join the family. This is an important time to catch up and have a break from books and the computer.

Caffeine should be avoided as it dehydrates the brain and can impede sleep whilst water is essential as it hydrates the brain and makes it work better.

Regular exercise can also help your child. A brisk walk around the block can help clear the mind before the next revision session, get the oxygen flowing to the brain and helps relaxation and reduces stress.

We all know a late night affects the way we feel the next day. Encourage your child to go to bed at a reasonable time during their exams. They may be feeling particularly nervous the night before an exam so encourage them to stop working early in the evening and take some time to relax; maybe watching a film with the family. Discourage any last minute cramming which could make them forget what they have already revised.

The night before an exam make sure your child has everything they need for their exam, double check when and where the exam is, last minute panics in the morning will not help, and remind them they are not allowed to take any electronic equipment including mobile phones into the exam room. Set an alarm clock, or maybe two, ensuring you leave enough time to get to school well before the exam starts.

On the day of the exam ensure your child is out of bed if you need to leave the house before them. They should have a good breakfast or lunch before an exam. The cafe in school is open from 8am so if they don't eat at home they could have a breakfast in school, maybe with friends, whilst giving their notes a last read over.





Don't forget to wish your child well - this is what they have worked so hard for and they will appreciate your support even if they do not show it.

After the exam ask how it went but don't insist on a detailed account. They may need some space or want to talk about their exam before they move on. Encourage your child not to dwell on the exam they have just done but to focus on the ones that are left to do.

### **What else can you do?**

Encourage your child without too much pressure. Regular "check-ins" may help and show interest in what they have to say even if you don't follow all of the technical detail. Offer praise and encouragement and if things don't go too well help them to move on.

You may want to arrange something special for the end of the exams to give your child something to look forward to.

### **Contact details**

Mr Hiscock - Year Coordinator	<a href="mailto:m.hiscock@mardenhigh.net">m.hiscock@mardenhigh.net</a>
Mrs Paylor Wright - Examinations Officer	<a href="mailto:d.paylorwright@mardenhigh.net">d.paylorwright@mardenhigh.net</a>
Mrs Cathcart - 11M Form Tutor	<a href="mailto:e.cathcart@mardenhigh.net">e.cathcart@mardenhigh.net</a>
Mrs Eastlake - 11A Form Tutor	<a href="mailto:h.eastlake@mardenhigh.net">h.eastlake@mardenhigh.net</a>
Mrs Hall - 11R Form Tutor	<a href="mailto:l.hall@mardenhigh.net">l.hall@mardenhigh.net</a>
Mr Hunter - 11D Form Tutor	<a href="mailto:e.hunter@mardenhigh.net">e.hunter@mardenhigh.net</a>
Mr Horn - 11E Form Tutor	<a href="mailto:d.horn@mardenhigh.net">d.horn@mardenhigh.net</a>
Miss Mulvenney - 11N Form Tutor	<a href="mailto:l.mulvenney@mardenhigh.net">l.mulvenney@mardenhigh.net</a>
Mrs McHanwell 11X Form Tutor	<a href="mailto:c.mchanwell@mardenhigh.net">c.mchanwell@mardenhigh.net</a>

If your contact details change please let school know.

### **Useful Revision Resources**

The following table gives some useful websites and revision guides which your child will find helpful for their revision.

