

# Supporting your child through the GCSE examinations



CAISTER ACADEMY  
Creative Education Trust  
School of Literature  
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DID YOU KNOW PARENTAL SUPPORT IS 8 TIMES MORE IMPORTANT IN DETERMINING A CHILD'S ACADEMIC SUCCESS THAN SOCIAL CLASS?

## Assisting with Revision



One of the many secrets to doing well in examinations, is staying calm – easier said than done. This really comes down to feeling in control, and you can help your child to feel this way by helping them map out revision routines. This is most effectively done by creating a timetable in a central area of the house, ticking off sessions, and constantly talking about how the revision is going.

It is important that the timetable also has the breaks, exercise and the activities they enjoy mapped out. All of this can help ensure that the balance between work and relaxation is good!

## Effective Revision Strategies



1. Be organised – know what your child is doing and what they want to achieve from their revision session.
2. Be focused – avoid any distractions for them: phones, TV, siblings, etc.
3. Be prepared – ensure that you keep a healthy stock of stationary in the house, particularly pens, paper, cue cards, highlighters, etc.
4. Be interested – ask them questions related to what they wanted to achieve. What are their next steps?
5. Be time aware – ensure they take a break every 30 minutes

### Where to seek support...

- ✓ The school
- ✓ [Childline's advice on Exam Stress](#)
- ✓ [NSPCC - Beat Exam Stress](#)
- ✓ [13 Stressbusting Tips](#)
- ✓ [Coping with Stress](#)



## Creating the Climate for Success

Creating a calm atmosphere at home is a quick win to reducing stress caused by examinations, but it can be easier said than done.

You may notice your child is more irritable or short tempered. This is typical and understandable.

Try to be flexible around exam time. When your child is revising all day, do not worry about household jobs left undone or untidy bedrooms.

Staying calm yourself can help. Having the whole family's support and understanding is important too. Remember, exams do not last forever.

## Keeping Active



Exercise can help boost energy levels, clear the mind and relieve stress. It does not matter what it is – walking, cycling, swimming, football and dancing are all effective.

Activities that involve other people can be particularly helpful



## Make Time for Treats

With your child, think about rewards for doing revision and getting through each exam.

Rewards do not need to be big or expensive. They can include simple things like making their favourite meal or watching TV.

## Looking Out for Stress

Stress helps you meet your daily challenges and motivates you to reach your goals, ultimately making you a smarter, happier and healthier person. That's right. Good stress is vital for a healthy life.

However, bad stress can be an issue at this time in your child's life. Children and young people who are stressed may:

- worry a lot
- feel tense
- have headaches and stomach pains
- not sleep well
- be irritable
- lose interest in food or eat more than normal
- not enjoy activities they previously enjoyed
- be negative and have a low mood
- feel hopeless about the future

## Early Action



Having someone to talk to about their work can help. Support from a parent, tutor or study buddy can help young people share their worries and keep things in perspective.

Encourage your child to talk to a member of school staff who they feel is supportive. If you think your child is not coping, it may also be helpful for you to talk to their teachers.

Try to involve your child as much as possible.

Remind your child that it's normal to feel anxious. Nervousness is a natural reaction to exams. The key is to put these nerves to positive use.

If anxiety is getting in the way rather than helping, encourage your child to practise the activities they'll be doing on the day of the exam. This will help it feel less scary.

Help your child face their fears and see these activities through, rather than avoiding them.

Encourage them to think about what they know and the time they've already put into studying to help them feel more confident.

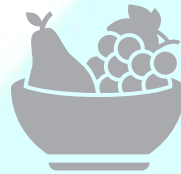


## Good Routines

One of the best things you can do for your child is to make sure they are in school for the start of the day... every day.

Having clear routines will help your child manage their focus and time, and get into a consistent rhythm ready for the examinations.

1. Agree on a suitable morning wake-up – it's OK being in school, but it helps if your child is alert and ready for learning.
2. Agree on a reasonable bed time – many students are still tired from irregular sleep patterns. This can cause unnecessary stress and strain.



## Eating Healthy

A balanced diet is vital for your child's health, and can help them feel well during exam periods.

Some parents find high-fat, high-sugar and high-caffeine foods and drinks, such as energy drinks, cola, sweets, chocolate, burgers and chips, make their children hyperactive, irritable and moody.

Where possible, involve your child in shopping for food and encourage them to choose some healthy snacks.

## Avoid Adding Pressure

Support group Childline says many children who contact them feel that most pressure at exam time comes from their family.

Listen to your child, give them support and avoid criticism.

Before they go in for a test or exam, be reassuring and positive. Let them know that failing is not the end of the world. If things do not go well they may be able to take the exam again.

After each exam, encourage your child to talk it through with you. Discuss the parts that went well rather than focusing on the questions they found difficult. Then move on and focus on the next test, rather than dwelling on things that cannot be changed.