



Robert Smyth Academy

Dear Parents/Carers,

Coronavirus update

Firstly, I would like to thank all parents who ensured that their child came back to school following the revised hygiene protocols. This is important as we have continued to see case rates increase over the last month and because we want to ensure the safety of our community and educational continuity for all.

Please ensure that your child has a clean face covering ready for school next week and continue to support your child so that they use lateral flow testing, twice per week and that they do not attend school if they have any symptoms of coronavirus. These remain important measures that we can take to keep everyone safe.

Revision skills (all year groups)



This week, I presented our whole school revision strategy to students during a Virtual Expectations Assembly. This follows feedback from students and parents who are keen to know more about how to revise ahead of the coming assessment period.

All students will be taught a range of revision techniques by their Form Tutor and in curriculum time. This will allow them to establish good study habits that will maximise their ability to recall and retrieve key subject knowledge. We have based our strategy on the best available research about learning. We have also planned this approach so that we can empower students so that they are able to make revision manageable so that this does not become something that they worry about unduly.


Please note the following information so that you can have discussions about revision at home and encourage your child to adopt these techniques. We hope that this helps.

1. Do – Revision starts with activity (doing).

Aim for 20-30 minutes. **Put on a timer on** to help you focus

Things you should be doing...

- Read and reduce
- Write questions based on your material
- Create a mind map
- Create revision cards
- Read through your resources. Cover and say, check and repeat



1. Revision starts with activity (**doing**). This could be writing cue cards or drawing a mind map. This might take 20 minutes of work, for example. It is often useful to put on a timer to bring about focus



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2. Review (test your knowledge)



Quiz yourself or get someone else such as a parent to quiz you on the things you have learnt. Spend around 20 minutes on this part. **This part has the most impact**

Things you should be doing...

- **Look, cover, write, check, correct.** Use your knowledge organiser or any posters, mind maps you have created in your 'Do' section
- **Answer practice questions.** These could be past exam questions or questions you have created in your 'Do' section
- **Get someone to test you.** Ask a friend or family member to quiz you on what you have been learning using your poster/mindmap/knowledge organiser
- **Quiz yourself using revision cards**

3. Go back through – Now you need to go back through things you didn't know or could not remember.

Plan to spend another 20 minutes here.

Things you should be doing...

- Check what you have done is accurate
- Amend and improve what you created in the test activity
- Revisit the bits you got wrong or the bits you are less confident on

2. Parents can help their child to revise by taking the revision materials and simply asking questions. This increases memory retention and is known as the 'testing effect'. This could be 20 minutes.

Parents don't need to understand the material; they just need to ask the questions

3. Now is a good time for the student to go back through misconceptions or things that they didn't know or could not remember. This is a way of 'plugging the gaps' and could take 20 minutes

Virtual Wellbeing Box

This week, the leadership team reviewed the comments raised by students. We have written in response, below:

Q. Would it be possible to organise a Christmas jumper day to raise funds for charity?

A. We have met with our charity committee (RSA CAIRS) who have also asked us to consider this as an alternative to a non-uniform day. We are concerned about the pressure that holding a Christmas jumper day may place on families or children who feel compelled to buy something new, solely to fit in with a school event particularly so close to Christmas. Therefore, we will arrange a Christmas colour day on the last day of term whereby all students will be able to wear a Christmas jumper or festive colours (red, green, yellow) instead of a blazer, for this day only.

Q. As we (Year 11) are approaching trial exams, could we use some PSHE time to revise with our Form Tutor?

A. Yes, this is something that we have planned to do in the week leading up to the trial examinations. It is also important to follow a revision timetable and to follow the 'Do – Review – Go back through' model that you will be taught in your lessons and by your Form Tutor in the coming weeks. As I said in my virtual assembly on Wednesday, I would strongly advise spending the most time on the 'Review' part of this process, it really works well!

Thank you again for taking the time to read this letter. Have a restful weekend.

Yours sincerely,

Dan Cleary
Principal



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