Supporting your daughter through her GCSEs

So this is it, Year 10, the start of the most important time, educationally, of your daughter’s life so far. This is when she has to grow up a bit, take responsibility, focus and make sure that she doesn’t waste a minute. Time is incredibly short….there are about eighteen months left. In those eighteen months, your daughter’s subject teachers will be supporting, guiding, cajoling and encouraging her to complete all her classwork, homework and Controlled Assessments, and then will help her prepare for written exams.

However, we also need you to support us to support your daughter:

* We need you to ensure that she attends school, on time, every day
* We need you to ensure that she comes to school prepared for classes and hard work
* We need you to encourage her to work at home. She should be working for at least 90 minutes most evenings, and for approximately half a day on the weekend
* We need you to help your daughter to stay healthy—drink lots of water, eat breakfast, eat well, sleep well
* We need you to encourage her to attend LEAP (P6) coursework catch up sessions, and any holiday support that’s provided
* We need to you to encourage her to participate in extra curricular activities—sport, choir, etc.
* We need you to help her to be the very best that she can be

Useful school contacts -

- Main Reception Number— 01225 426151
- Your daughter’s tutor
- Director of Achievement - Mrs Eaton — j.eaton@hayesfield.com
- Assistant Director of Achievement—Miss Norton—h.norton@hayesfield.com
- Pastoral Manager - Mrs White — l.white@hayesfield.com

Useful websites -

- Hayesfield Girls School [http://hayesfield.com](http://hayesfield.com)
- AQA [http://web.aqa.org.uk](http://web.aqa.org.uk)
- EDEXCEL [http://www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com)
- WJEC [http://www.wjec.co.uk](http://www.wjec.co.uk)
- OCR [http://www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)
- mymaths [http://www.mymaths.co.uk](http://www.mymaths.co.uk)
- Sam Learning [https://www.samlearning.com](https://www.samlearning.com)
- BBC Schools [http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/11_16/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/11_16/)
- BBC Bitesize [http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/)
- PiXL Independence [https://students.pixl.org.uk/#1/](https://students.pixl.org.uk/#1/)
  (PiXL School Number: 103676   Password: Indep98)
Look on the GCSE Support Tab on the website, and help your daughter get a copy of the PLCs (syllabus) for each of her subjects. The website tells you which Awarding Body each of the different subjects use. The Awarding Body websites are also very helpful. She should spend some time looking at these websites, and see what they have to help her.

We suggest that your daughter use these PLCs as a list of everything that she should know. Get her to colour code these—different for sections that she is happy with, less confident with etc. By the time of her exams, her PLCs should look battered and well-used!

Make sure that your daughter gets revision books for each of her subjects. They are invaluable, as they reduce everything down, and also include mind maps, diagrams etc..

Also, encourage your daughter to get hold of past papers and mark schemes, again available on the Awarding Body websites. She should practice with these papers, and use the mark schemes to mark them. This way, she can find out exactly what the examiners are looking for. Also, there are only so many questions she could be asked on each topic — if she looks at enough past papers, she will have seen them all.

How your daughter revises is most important. Some don'ts:
- don't let her just read her specification, books or class notes
- don't let her just work through questions
- don't let her forget to take a break!

Everyone finds revising tedious. Remind your daughter: Nothing easy is worthwhile. Nothing worthwhile is easy.

So, fire her up and encourage her to:
- use lots of different ways to revise
- plan her revision with a timetable
- read her notes, then write summaries of them
- draw diagrams
- sketch mind maps (spider diagrams) of key issues
- use different coloured paper or ink to emphasise
- use mnemonics (rhymes of word lists) to prompt
- use revision cards
- revise with a friend: ask and answer questions
- work through past exam papers
- answer guided questions in revision books
- record her notes on an audio device, and listen to them
- take her notes for a walk and read them out loud.

The saying ‘you can never revise enough’ may be true, but don’t let your daughter sit for hours on end working at the same subject — her revision will be most effective in the first hour.

So make sure she:
- plans revision slots of between 30-40 minutes
- has something to look forward to, for when she has finished, e.g. a TV show, or meeting a friend
- ticks off things that she has done, and notes things that she still has to do
- starts revising early.

Help her to identify somewhere where she won’t be disturbed. Make sure she has a desk to work at, with everything she needs at hand. Try to help her to create an environment without distractions — no phone, social networking etc.. She needs to be able to work for short sessions, with no interruption.

GOOD LUCK!!