



SIXTH FORM

Supporting Your Child Through Year 13

A guide for
Parents and Carers



STJOHN'S
MARLBOROUGH



Year 13 is a pivotal year. Students are balancing academic pressure, increasing independence, university or apprenticeship applications, and important final examinations. Your support remains one of the strongest influences on their success.

This booklet outlines:

- How parents can help
- What students should be doing to succeed
- What predicted grades are and why they matter
- How to make the most of Parents' Evening
- Revision Strategies
- Independent Learning



Understanding Year 13

Year 13 is different from previous years because:

- Students complete coursework/NEA (where applicable)
- Students are expected to work on completing their university, apprenticeship, or employment applications whilst balancing their studies. UCAS applications are either due in October (early applicant) or mid-January.
- Offers may be conditional on achieving specific grades. There is more information on UCAS later on in this booklet.
- Students are preparing for independence

Key Contacts

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Mrs Wyatt - Exams Officer and Access Arrangement Coordinator. Contact for exam support and access arrangement questions.

How Parents/Carers Can Help

1. Encourage Independence (But Stay Involved)

Help your child plan their week. Encourage them to contact teachers themselves if they need help. Support problem-solving rather than solving problems for them.

2. Support Effective Study Habits

Encourage regular revision from September. Help them create a realistic study timetable. Promote active revision techniques (practice questions, flashcards, retrieval practice). Provide a quiet study space where possible.

3. Monitor Wellbeing

Year 13 can feel overwhelming. Watch for:
Changes in sleep or eating patterns
Withdrawal from family/friends
High anxiety levels

4. Talk About Future Plans

Whether applying through UCAS, seeking apprenticeships, or entering employment: Discuss options openly. Visit university open days. Help review personal statements. Encourage research into entry requirements.

5. Encourage Balance

Regular exercise, Time with friends, Downtime & Healthy routines.

6. Celebrate Effort, Not Just Outcomes

Focus on:
Progress, Resilience, Consistency, Positive habits. This builds confidence and motivation.



What Students Should Be Doing to Be Successful

Work Consistently:

- Complete all homework on time.
- Review classwork weekly.
- Begin revision early (not just before exams).
- Use feedback to improve.



Manage Time Well

- Students should:
- Use study periods productively.
- Balance schoolwork with part-time jobs.
- Avoid last-minute cramming.

Actively Seek Help

- Attend support sessions.
- Ask teachers for clarification.
- Use subject-specific revision resources.

Stay Organised

- Keep folders up to date.
- Track deadlines.
- Monitor grades and progress.

Revise Smart

- Effective revision includes:
- Past paper practice
- Mark scheme analysis
- Self-testing
- Identifying weak areas
- Interleaving topics



What are predicted grades?

In Term 1, students will receive their updated MLO and UCAS Prediction for all A-level subjects, this will be issued as a report home. Then again Term 4 after mock exams.

What do these grades mean and how should students use them?

UCAS Predicted Grade -This grade is an aspirational target based on the highest piece of evidence a teacher has. The recalibration of grading in line with pre-pandemic levels means that your teachers might be slightly more cautious. Remember this is best case scenario at results day so your child is advised to be realistic when thinking about next steps.

MLO - This grade is the most likely outcome. Based on a range of evidence, this is a more realistic grade that your child is likely to achieve. Students should consider these grades when making university choices, so they are less likely to enter the clearing process on results day (more on this to come!).

What if your child needs higher UCAS predictions for their chosen university or apprenticeship?

We would advise your son/daughter to talk to their subject teacher and see if they can complete some additional work to show they are the standard of the higher grade needed. Students are advised to think carefully about whether their chosen university is achievable based on the data their teachers have entered – remember they are professionals, trust their judgement. Most importantly, encourage your child to talk to the 6th form team about their concerns.

Making the Most of Parents' Evening

Parents' Evening is a valuable opportunity to gain insight into your child's progress. Before the Evening, discuss with your child: How they feel each subject is going and areas they find difficult. It might be useful to review any recent reports, mock exam results and predicted grades.

Questions Parents May Wish to Ask Teachers

About Progress

- Is my child working at their predicted grade?
- What are their strengths in this subject?
- Where are they losing marks?

About Improvement

- What specific topics need more focus?
- What revision methods would you recommend?
- What grade is realistically achievable with sustained effort?

About Attitude and Effort

- How well do they use independent study time?
- Are they contributing in lessons?
- Do they seek help when needed?

About Exams

- What are the most common mistakes students make?
- Which past papers or resources should they prioritise?
- What would move them up to the next grade boundary?



Attendance Matters

Attendance is one of the most significant factors influencing a student's success in their final year of sixth form. Year 13 is a demanding academic year in which students prepare for final examinations, complete coursework, and make important decisions about their future. Regular attendance ensures that students receive the full benefit of teaching, guidance and support available to them.

Why Attendance Matters

Every lesson in Year 13 builds directly on previous learning. Missing lessons can quickly create gaps in understanding that are difficult to catch up on later. Students who attend regularly benefit from:

- Direct teaching and explanations from subject specialists
- Opportunities to ask questions and clarify misunderstandings
- Structured revision and exam preparation
- Feedback on practice exam questions
- Support with coursework or non-exam assessments
- Consistent academic routines
- Even missing a small number of lessons can result in important content being missed.

The Link Between Attendance and Grades

National research consistently shows a strong relationship between attendance and academic achievement.

Students with high attendance are significantly more likely to achieve higher grades at A-Level.

For example:

- 95–100% attendance - Students are more likely to achieve their target grades.
- 90% attendance - This equates to roughly one day of school missed every two weeks.
- 85% attendance - Students may miss three weeks of learning across the year.
- 80% attendance - This can mean around a full half-term of learning missed.
- In A-Level subjects where courses are intensive and content-heavy, missing this amount of learning can significantly affect outcomes.

Attendance Matters

The Impact of Poor Attendance

Gaps in knowledge and understanding

Reduced confidence in subjects

Increased stress before exams

Lower predicted or final grades

Limited access to support from teachers

It can also affect university and apprenticeship applications if progress becomes inconsistent.

Applications made through UCAS rely heavily on predicted grades and teacher references, both of which are influenced by a student's engagement and commitment to their studies.

What Parents Can Do to Support Good Attendance

Parents and carers play an important role in establishing good attendance habits.

You can support your child by:

- Encouraging them to attend every lesson unless they are genuinely unwell
- Avoiding holidays or appointments during term time where possible
- Reinforcing the importance of punctuality
- Helping them maintain a healthy sleep routine
- Supporting them if they feel overwhelmed or anxious about school
- Open communication with your child and with the school is key.

If Your Child Is Struggling

There may be times when students find it difficult to attend due to stress, anxiety, illness or personal circumstances.

If this happens:

- Encourage your child to speak to a member of staff
- Contact the school or sixth form team early
- Work with staff to identify support strategies
- Schools are there to support students and help them overcome challenges.

Supporting Your Child to Become Independent in Year 13

Year 13 is an important transition year. Students are preparing not only for final examinations but also for life after sixth form - whether that is university, apprenticeships or employment.

Developing independence during this year helps students build the confidence, organisation and resilience they will need for the next stage of their lives.

Parents play a vital role in encouraging independence while still providing support and reassurance.

Tips for Supporting Independence



1. Encourage Them to Take Ownership of Their Work. Rather than checking every piece of work or reminding them constantly, encourage students to take responsibility for their own progress.

You can support this by:

- Asking them about their learning rather than managing it
- Encouraging them to track deadlines themselves
- Supporting them to create their own study timetable
- Helpful questions include:
 - What are your priorities this week?
 - What revision are you planning tonight?
 - What is your next deadline?



2. Encourage Direct Communication With Teachers. Students should become comfortable speaking to teachers themselves when they need help.

Encourage them to:

- Ask questions in lessons
- Attend support or revision sessions
- Email teachers if they need clarification
- Seek feedback on how to improve
- This builds confidence and self-advocacy skills that will be important in higher education and employment.

Supporting Your Child to Become Independent in Year 13

3. Support Good Time Management

Year 13 students must balance:

- Lessons
- Independent study
- Revision
- Coursework
- Part-time jobs
- University or apprenticeship applications

You can help by encouraging them to:

Use a planner or digital calendar

Break revision into manageable chunks

Prioritise tasks based on deadlines

Avoid solving scheduling problems for them - instead, help them think through solutions.

4. Encourage Problem-Solving

It can be tempting to step in quickly when your child faces a challenge. However, independence grows when students work through problems themselves.

Instead of providing the answer immediately, try asking:

What options have you considered?

What do you think would work best?

Who could help you with this?

This encourages resilience and critical thinking.

5. Support Decision-Making

Year 13 students often make important decisions about their future, including university courses, apprenticeships or career paths.

You can support them by:

Listening to their ideas and interests

Discussing options together

Encouraging research and open days

Avoiding pressure to follow a specific path

Students are more motivated when they feel ownership of their decisions.

Active Revision strategies to Support your Child

In Year 13, students need to move beyond simply reading notes or highlighting textbooks. The most effective revision involves actively engaging with the material and regularly testing knowledge.

Parents can play a helpful role by encouraging and supporting these active revision techniques.

What Is Active Revision?

Active revision involves retrieving information from memory, applying knowledge and practising exam-style questions.

Research consistently shows that students remember information for longer when they practise recalling it rather than just reviewing it.

Passive revision methods such as highlighting, rereading notes or watching videos can feel productive but often do not lead to deep learning.

A Helpful Role for Parents

Parents do not need to be experts in the subject to support revision effectively.

Your role can include:

Showing interest in what your child is studying

Listening while they explain topics

Asking simple questions

Encouraging regular, short revision sessions

Supporting a balanced routine

Small conversations about learning can significantly improve understanding and confidence.

Active Revision strategies to Support your Child

1. Practice Past Exam Questions

One of the most effective revision methods is completing past exam questions.

This helps students to:

- Understand how questions are structured
- Practise exam technique
- Identify common mistakes
- Become familiar with mark schemes
- Parents can support this by:
- Asking your child to explain the question they are answering
- Timing short practice sessions
- Encouraging them to check answers against the mark scheme
- Exam boards publish past papers on their websites.

2. Retrieval Practice (Self-Testing)

Retrieval practice involves recalling information from memory without looking at notes.

Examples include:

Writing down everything remembered about a topic

Answering quick quiz questions

Using flashcards

Covering notes and trying to recall key points

Parents can help by:

Asking simple quiz questions

Listening while your child explains a topic

Testing definitions or key concepts

This strengthens long-term memory.

Active Revision strategies to Support your Child

3. Mind Mapping and Visual Summaries

Students can create visual summaries of topics using:

- Mind maps

- Diagrams

- Flowcharts

- Concept maps

This helps organise large amounts of information and show connections between ideas.

Parents can support by:

- Encouraging students to explain their mind map

- Asking them to add examples or key facts

- Suggesting they recreate the map from memory later

4. Creating Flashcards

Flashcards are useful for:

- Key terms and definitions

- Case studies

- Quotes or formulas

- Processes or steps

Students should use them actively by:

- Testing themselves regularly

- Removing cards they already know well

- Revisiting difficult cards frequently

Parents can help by asking quick flashcard questions.

Useful Websites for Parents

Supporting your child through A-Levels and university applications can feel overwhelming. The following trusted websites provide clear, reliable guidance for parents and carers.

St John's - Guide to Exams

A booklet to help guide you through exams, including key dates, exam preparation tips and FAQs.



Exam Support

UCAS



University Applications & UCAS Guidance

Includes a dedicated section for parents on UCAS application process, Key deadlines, Personal statements, Offers and Clearing

Supporting your child on Results Day

This should be your first reference point for accurate, up-to-date information.

Parentkind provides advice, resources and training to help parents support their child's learning, wellbeing and development throughout their education. It also promotes stronger partnerships between parents and schools, helping families play an active role in their child's educational journey.



ParentKind

CloudLearn



CloudLearn provides guidance and resources for parents to help them understand A-Levels, support effective study habits and help their child manage stress and motivation during exam preparation.

UCAS Applications: A Guide for Parents

For many Year 13 students, applying to university involves using UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). Understanding how this process works will help you support your child effectively.

Key UCAS Deadlines

While exact dates vary each year, important deadlines include:

Mid-October- Applications for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science.

January Main deadline for most undergraduate courses.

Late applications are possible but may limit options.

It is important that students meet our internal deadlines, which are earlier.

Clearing

Clearing allows students to apply for university places that still have availability after results are published.

It can be used if:

A student does not meet their offer on results day.

They change their mind about their choices.

They applied after the main deadline.

Preparation helps:

Research possible alternatives in advance.

Keep contact details accessible on Results Day.

Stay calm and proactive.

The Personal Statement

The personal statement is a key part of the application. It allows students to explain:

Why they want to study their chosen subject

What they have done beyond the classroom to prepare

Relevant skills, interests and experiences

How Parents Can Help

Encourage early drafting.

Offer to proofread for clarity and spelling (without rewriting it).

Ask questions that prompt reflection:

Why are you passionate about this subject?

What have you done outside lessons to explore it further?

What skills have you developed?

Admissions tutors value authenticity and reflection more than overly polished language.

Student Finance

Students applying to university will also need to apply separately for student finance through Student Finance England.

Applications usually open in the spring term of Year 13.

Parents may need to provide financial information to assess maintenance loan eligibility.

Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship combines hands-on work with the opportunity to train and obtain qualifications. This might be a paid position, so you could get paid as you learn!

At least 20% of your time is set aside for learning, usually at a college, university or with a training provider.

The rest of your time is spent applying your knowledge and skills in the actual workplace, doing the job that you set out to get. At the end of it, you'll gain official certification, which will be equivalent to traditional qualifications. Apprenticeship levels are set and equivalent to as follows:

- 2 (Intermediate): GCSEs
- 3 (Advanced): A Levels
- 4 (Higher): Foundation degree
- 5 (Higher): Foundation degree/first year of bachelor's degree
- 6 (Degree): Bachelor's degree
- 7 (Degree): Master's degree

- There is no set date that applications open, students need to keep their eyes peeled for any advertised.
- Encourage your child to contact any businesses they are interested in working for to see if they have vacancies coming up.
- Instead of producing a personal statement, support students in getting their CV and covering letter to a high standard. We can still proofread these and support your child with them.

Encourage your child to network with industry people by using LinkedIn. In many cases, "who you know" can have a huge impact on careers.

**Scan here to access lots of
information via
'Amazing Apprenticeship'**

