



Parkside Academy

An Outstanding School

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Dear Parent,

'Thinking Hard' Teaching and Learning Strategy

At Parkside Academy, we are committed to providing pupils with an outstanding education which will enable them to fulfil their ambitions and develop their skills. As you may be aware, the Government has recently introduced challenging new GCSEs with the aim of stretching pupils academically and encouraging them to strive for excellence. With this in mind we have launched a new '**Thinking Hard**' teaching and learning strategy, which focuses on helping pupils to deepen their thinking, question effectively and become reflective and resilient learners so that they are equipped with the skills that they will need for both further education and employment.

The first strand of this campaign will focus on '**Re-thinking revision**' and will provide ways to support your child so that they know how to revise effectively and develop essential study skills. Staff have been working together on this and we have created a resource which contains lots of ideas on how to revise effectively. The ideas are categorised under a four step plan:

- Understand it
- Condense it
- Memorise it
- Review it

The enclosed postcard summarises a wide range of revision strategies which your child can use to ensure that revision is meaningful and varied. Staff will be using these ideas in lessons and also during revision and intervention sessions so that pupils become accustomed to using different techniques. All teachers will also be incorporating 'flashback' activities into their lessons which will comprise of short activities designed to review previous learning.

We know that pupils who are organised and well prepared will perform better in their exams and it is essential that pupils understand the importance of working independently. Therefore, all Year 11 pupils will be completing a revision timetable to ensure that they maximise the time available to them prior to their examinations in the summer term. Pupils will receive a template and guidance during tutor time and all of our teaching staff would appreciate your support in helping pupils to utilise their time effectively.

We will continue to develop the thinking hard strategy throughout the year and I will provide updates on new resources and strategies which are relevant to your child. Of course, your support at home is invaluable and we would appreciate you getting involved in all aspects of your child's schoolwork and revision. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me but in the meantime thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Taylor
Assistant Headteacher

