



The Extended Learning Timetable

Information for parents

What have we done to support with the large volume of information students must remember for Year 11 exams?

In order to support our students, we have studied a significant amount of *educational research and cognitive science* on the subject of the retention of fact based information.

This research has identified several strategies to support students to retain large amounts of information in their memories for the examination series in Year 11.

So, what works to help students remember key information?

The most practical and powerful methods are: quizzing, testing over long periods of time and using '*Knowledge Organisers*'.

Cognitive science has demonstrated that *quizzing and testing* on fact based information over the entire course of study has a significant impact on improving students' memory capacity.

In practice, this involves consistently returning to short tests on previously taught topics throughout the teaching of the course of study (*which may be up to three years*), rather than teaching a topic and moving on without returning to this topic until revising for the final exams.

How is the extended learning timetable designed?

The extended learning timetable is designed to support this form of *continuous quizzing*.

All curriculum areas at Denefield have designed '*Knowledge Organisers*' for our students. These are a *diagram on a single side of A4* containing the key knowledge and information necessary to understand the topic being taught in a period of study which would normally last a term.

How does the extended learning timetable work in practice?

Once per fortnight, a student's extended learning will be to memorise the subject Knowledge Organisers identified on the extended learning timetable – one Knowledge Organiser per fortnight, per subject.

These will be tested the following week in the lessons for that subject. For example, if a maths Knowledge Organiser homework is on the timetable for Tuesday week A, students will be tested by quizzes on these from Tuesday week B in lessons and on Show My Homework. This pattern would then continue across the year. And, as the year progresses, questions from previous Knowledge Organisers would be included in the quizzes and tests in order to ensure previous knowledge is being retained.

This method of testing a previous term's learning in a new term follows the best practice identified by cognitive science in the understanding of '*The Forgetting Curve*' and '*Spaced Learning*' which shows how easily we all forget new information if this information is not consistently revisited. The '*use it or lose it*' model of improving memory skills.

Ultimately, through hard work and repetition, cognitive science shows that we can all improve our memory skills – and therefore, with this hard work, our young people can retain more key knowledge to take with them into '*closed book*' exams.

As a parent/carer, how can I help my child and support the success of this method?

A huge benefit to the Knowledge Organiser method is how much we can help our children improve their memories and retain key knowledge at home – and how simple this is to do.

Often parents have told me that they can become frustrated when wanting to help their children to complete homework that is sometimes difficult to understand. The Knowledge Organiser method eradicates this problem. You can trust us as education professionals to identify the key information that your children need to memorise and retain to succeed in exams. You can also trust us to test you children in our classrooms and on Show My Homework.

In order to support our students to succeed in the classroom, you can follow some simple steps at home to ensure your child is progressing and memorising the information required for examinations:

- **Quiz your son or daughter** on the facts in the Knowledge Organiser by asking them questions like, '*When was the play Macbeth written?*' or '*What is the equation we use to calculate the speed a car is travelling at?*'. These will be right or wrong – simple as that, and the answers are all on the Knowledge Organisers. You just form the question.
- **Design quick ten question quizzes** using the Knowledge Organiser for the questions and answers – test your child regularly, change the questions regularly.
- **Ask your child to draw sections of the Knowledge Organiser from memory**, then check what they have written. Get them to write what they didn't remember in another colour pen, pause for a break, allow them to re-study their notes – and then repeat.
- **Ask your child to draw** as much information as possible from the Knowledge Organiser in the form of **a mindmap** (see Tony Buzan website), then check what they have written. Get them to write what they didn't remember in another colour pen, pause for a break, allow them to re-study their notes – and then repeat.
- **Record the sections of Knowledge Organisers onto a sound file or a video** using a mobile phone or laptop. Listen/watch repeatedly and then try to write, or speak (but record it for later), the information you have memorised. Check against the original and repeat.