



St Nicholas Diocesan School

A Co-Educational, Independent, Anglican, Day and Boarding School for pupils from Grade RR-12

Wednesday, 16 October 2019

Dear Parents, Guardians and Learners

We are fast approaching the end of the 2019 academic year and for most learners this means that the serious task of studying for exams has already begun. As parents we want our children to achieve to the best of their ability but are unsure how we can help. A recent article in The Guardian gave the following advice on how to support your child during the exam season.

1. Expectations matter

Place a high value on education and have high academic expectations for your child. A recent study showed this to have the greatest positive effect on learner achievement. But having high expectations without providing appropriate support will not help. Recent research suggests that we need to help children develop resilience, with children who have supportive parents achieving better grades as well as being more socio-emotionally adjusted.

2. Setbacks are opportunities for learning

The exam season is an emotional rollercoaster, with a series of highs and lows. How well parents react to their child's lows may well determine how many highs they have. Those who see mistakes as opportunities to learn, instead of as personal judgements, are more likely to develop a growth mind-set.

3. Use deadlines, avoid nagging

People tend to underestimate the time that is needed to complete a task. This is known as the planning fallacy. Research suggests that the most effective way to overcome this is to set clearly defined deadlines. If parents and children do this together, students are less likely to set unrealistic deadlines, and parents are less likely to feel like they are nagging.

4. Put phones away

Excessive use can lead to a wide range of negative consequences that include, but are not limited to, reduced concentration, memory and an increase in stress, anxiety and FOMO (fear of missing out).

5. If students sleep right, they think right

The National Sleep Foundation recommends students get about nine hours sleep a night. Research suggests there is a strong relationship between getting a regular night's sleep and exam results (about half a grade different per subject).

6. Get young people out of the house

Three-quarters of children in the UK spend less time outside than prison inmates. It is tempting for them to hole themselves up trying to get every inch out of their revision, but we should really be encouraging students to get some fresh air at least once a day.

Good luck to all in the exam season.

Yours sincerely

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