

Advice for Parents

Suggestions to help you support your child with their English work:

1) Encouraging reading.

- The *single most valuable activity* your child can undertake to improve their performance in English is reading. Besides texts studied in class, pupils should have a personal reading book on the go at all times.
- Pupils in S1/S2 should be reading *at least* 1-2 hours per week. All pupils have access to the school library and enjoy 10 mins of personal reading time most periods they are in English. Pupils in S3/4 should be reading *at least* 2-3 hours per week. This should include both a fiction 'personal reading' book, as well as articles from quality broadsheet newspapers, in preparation for S4 exams.
- Pupils in S5/6 should be reading quality broadsheet journalism at every opportunity in preparation for their close reading exam: one article per day is recommended. Maintaining a habit of reading fiction will also help with the writing folio.
- Encourage your child to read by visiting a bookshop or library together, discussing areas of interest and favourite genres, and by reading together or sharing books. Many parents have had success in encouraging their child to read more by reading the same book alongside them, as it fosters discussion (or sometimes competition!)

2) Checking Homework Diaries

- All pupils are issued with a homework diary at the start of each year in which homework can be logged. In English, pupils may have regular homework on a set day, or occasional deadlines set throughout the year. Teachers will ask pupils to log homework in their planners at the time it is set.
- Checking your child's diary with them can help them ensure all upcoming deadlines are met.

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3) Encouraging independent revision.

- During periods where pupils may not have homework set, encourage them to brush up on their spelling, grammar, punctuation or reading by using the many quizzes, games and websites available online. Check out the links on this blog for some suggestions.

4) Getting the best from tutors

Some parents may choose to employ a tutor to work with their child in their senior years. The following tips will ensure the work they undertake is productive:

- Pupils should revise *only* the texts they have studied in class with tutors. Pupils should not study brand new texts with tutors.
- While tutors can give useful advice on how to write folio pieces, they cannot write the essay for the pupil. The [SQA guidelines](#) on coursework are clear and punishments for plagiarism are severe.
- Your child will be given regular feedback and advice in class, including specific targets for development. Encourage your child to discuss these with tutors before beginning work.
- The class teacher may teach a particular structure or style of essay writing. Ensuring tutors are familiar with the work your child has undertaken in class will limit confusion and avoid contradicting established ways of working.