

TOP TIPS FOR WORKING FROM HOME

Draw up a daily timetable

Ensure your day has structure. Draw up a routine to help you keep focused, adding timeframes to each activity. Vary your activities, to keep your brain interested and use different forms of study including online study and online classroom interaction. Set up subject groups with other pupils so that you can work together outside of virtual classrooms to enable you to support each other with work. Research shows that after 40-50 minutes your ability to retain information begins to diminish, so ensure you take regular short breaks to maximise retention of information.

Exercise

Physical activity is very important, particularly when usual forms of exercising ie at school, in clubs and other groups are prohibited. At lunchtime take the opportunity to move around. If you have access to a garden, go outside and walk/run around your garden 10 times. If you don't have access to outside space, go up and downstairs 10 times. After school, access online fitness apps or groups, or even set up a virtual class with your friends to enjoy group activity. Physical activity increases heart rate, which makes the blood circulate faster. This in turn ensures that brain gets more oxygen, which increases productivity whilst reducing tiredness and stress.

Find a quiet space

This is a pretty straightforward one: you desperately need a place where you can be organised and uninterrupted whilst studying or accessing online lessons. Set up your space so that it is tidy and well organised with all the equipment you need. Ensure you have some water close by and minimise interrupting study sessions, by ensuring you have comfort breaks between virtual lessons or between 40-50 minute study sessions. Switch off mobile devices and put them in another room, so they do not distract you!

Get yourself ready the night before!

Get your books etc for the following day, ready the night before, as you would do if you were going into school. Ensure your working space is completely ready, so that you can start work on time, feeling organised.

Retaining information

Everybody responds to information in different ways, some people are more visual than auditory, and some are kinaesthetic. Try to learn the same piece of information using different methods, for example straightforward reading (visual), making notes

(kinaesthetic), learning maps (also visual), recording yourself reading the notes and playing it back (auditory). This means that you have more than one source to draw the information from.

Use a bit of colour when making notes or creating learning maps. Colour will help you to memorise facts far more effectively than plain black and white notes will!

Do your homework/online learning activities!

We are not sure right now how long it will be before we can return to school and face to face teaching. It is therefore vitally important that you complete all homework activities as well as fully participate in virtual lessons. Keeping your brain active and in the 'learning mode' will make it much easier when you return to school. Information you've already stored in your brain will still be easily accessible and you will be able to readily return to your normal school routine if you have maintained and fully participated in all online and remote learning activities including homework.

Balance

It is not all about the work! Finding the right balance between study and relaxation will help you focus when you need to. Stay focused, be organised and fully participate in all the activities available and when you have down-time, do something to switch your mind off ie read a book, listen to some music, get out in your garden, move your body, join or create an online exercise group, keep in touch with your friends and family remotely, everyone needs to keep connected with everyone else in a safe way!

Think positive!

We are all in this together! For those who were due to take exams this summer, achievement is not all about how you perform in an exam. You are a whole person, not just the information that you can deliver in an exam room. Your teachers know you; you have been in their classroom for literally hundreds of hours. You have completed hundreds of activities which they have seen or marked. They want the very best for you and want to help you successfully move onto your next step. Keep doing the best you can do and being the best you can be – that is enough!