

Revisiting Learning

Information for Parents and Carers

Did you know?

Remembering information is the first step for students in mastering higher level skills. For students to be able to explain, analyse, evaluate and create, they need to have a firm knowledge of the information and terms involved first.

Ebbinghaus' forgetting curve aims to show us how information can be lost from our memories over time when we don't retrieve it. The forgetting curve suggests that after only 1 hour up to 55% of new information has been forgotten. Regularly revisiting and retrieving this information into our long-term memory.

The more frequently that information is revisited and used, the more likely it is to move into our longer-term memory. Research shows that revisiting learning frequently is more effective than mass-revision. Unfortunately, many students report that they don't feel like it's working and they prefer larger and rarer chunks. Knowing this is useful for us, and the young people we care about, so we can talk about it and address the issue, even showing them typical forgetting curves and sharing examples of these.

What can you do?

One of the easiest ways to assist children of all ages to retrieve their knowledge is ask them about it. The journey home, or at the weekend are great opportunities to talk about what has been taught that week, ensuring you ask questions that demand retrieval.

Alternatively, encourage your child to make notes of the key information for topics that they are studying. They may highlight these in a book/on a sheet, write them down onto flash cards, create a mind map or record them in any other way that they wish.

If your child is unsure, ask their teachers what topics they should focus on and whether any additional information can be provided.

Encourage revisiting of topics frequently, using a home-learning schedule. Discuss with your child the need to revisit learning as they progress through units, move onto next ones and come to the end of a term or year.

Revision shouldn't be revising all the knowledge from the entire year; we should aim to revisit the learning frequently to embed it into our long-term memories and then revise the higher skills using this knowledge as we go further into the course.

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