

Parents Information Evening: GCSE Biology



Your child is studying the **AQA GCSE Biology** course

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/biology-8461>

- There will be **two examinations**: paper 1 and paper 2
- Each paper contributes 50% towards the overall GCSE
- Each examination is 1 hour and 45 minutes
- The examination comprises the following format: **multiple choice, structured questions, closed answers and open responses.**

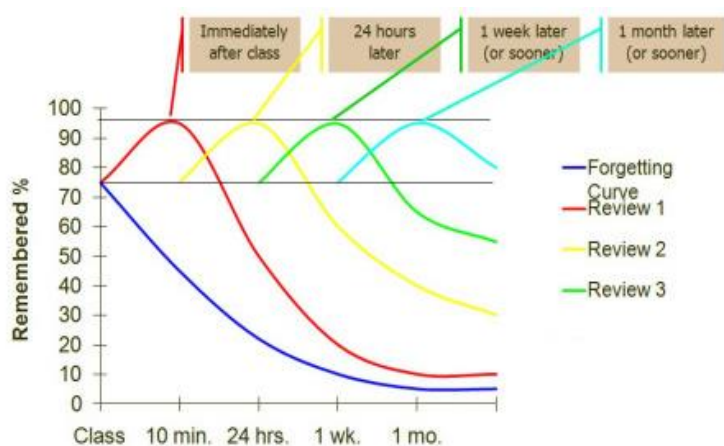
Examination Breakdown

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|---------|--|
| Paper 1 | Topics 1-4 Cell biology, organisation, infection and response and bioenergetics. |
| Paper 2 | Topics 5-7 Homeostasis and response, inheritance, variation and evolution. |

All students are taught in mixed ability sets and all classes cover the full range of specification content throughout the three years. We do this to ensure that all students can access the higher tier papers, if they are performing well and coping with the demand of those papers. However, some students do struggle with the more challenging concepts and higher demand questions and will therefore be entered for foundation tier, capping their potential grade at 5. Final tier decisions are not made until Autumn of Year 11 and tier decisions will be communicated formally to parents via letter.

What Can You Do to Support Your Child's Progress in Science?

Science is a **content-based curriculum**, which means students need to learn and recall key terminology, then make links between topic areas.



In each lesson, new content is introduced, and previous content interleaved. The figure below shows what happens to memory over time.

The key to the success of your child making progress in science is through the **continued revisiting of prior learning.**

This should be an “active” process, whereby your child should be testing whether they can recall previous knowledge.

Passive activities, like reading revision guides, watching video

clips and reading class notes are proven the least effective in students being able to successfully recall and apply knowledge under examination conditions. It also does not allow for them to access the higher order questions such as explain or analyse.

Some suggested “active” strategies that you can support your child with are:

- Completing Seneca revision using the class code they have been given by their teacher.
- Purchasing a suitable workbook and completing the practice questions for topics that have been taught.
- Making revision cards which are left in a communal area at home and used regularly to test your child.
- Using Key Stage 4 BBC bitesize to play the activities and take the quizzes/end of topic tests.
- Accessing support using the biology padlet <https://padlet.com/dallison6/g5f3k590scut>