

Supporting transition from KS3 to GCSE



This article has been written by parenting author and blogger Becky Goddard-Hill.

KS3 has been about adapting to a new school; increased and varied subjects, new friends, extra school activities, increasing independence and hormonal changes. Your children have spent these few years getting used to a bigger school and becoming teenagers. It's been a lot to take in but hopefully it's also been a huge amount of fun and not too much pressure.

During Year 9 (ages 13-14) your child will choose which subjects to study at Key Stage 4 (Years 10 to 11). These will be the subjects they will take for GCSE exams. Some of these subjects will be core subjects (compulsory) and the rest will be ones they have chosen themselves. This choice should hopefully mean they have increased interest in the subject they go forward to study.

The school will give your child information about GCSE choices and guidance but it is also helpful if you discuss their choices with them. It's important they choose subjects they find interesting and are competent at. Age 13-14 is very young to be choosing a career path so some balance in GCSE subjects is advisable.

With the transition to GCSE years things will get more serious.

Taking it more seriously

It is important that children realise that that right from the start of their GCSE years their work is relevant to their exams. Much of it will be assessed and almost all of it will be important when they come to revise. They need to take it seriously, work hard and understand what they are studying as they go along.

Being organised

Being organised is really going to matter during the GCSE years and a good system will be vital from the start. Clear note taking will be absolutely crucial to their revision later. A good system of storing books and written work is important. A clear space to study and the right equipment is also really helpful. As parents there is a lot we can do to help our children organise themselves and their work well.

Managing the stress

Starting GCSE's can make young people very stressed as homework can increase quickly and the work get more complex, As the work gets more intense and exams loom, feelings of stress may well increase and become problematic. That's why any stress needs to be managed from the start of these exam years not just when the exams arrive.

Regular exercise and sleep and a healthy diet are crucial to feelings of wellbeing and have a positive knock on effect on emotional health and resourcefulness. These basics are crucial to coping and need to be prioritised. A clear time table for homework that includes breaks is also really important to set up early so good study habits become well established right at the start of the GCSE years.

Transitioning to GCSE's is a big step. The qualifications we get at 16 are a springboard to our future paths and can determine so much. They really do matter and it is a balance to instil in our children how important they are whilst not putting undue pressure on them. It's a fine line to tread as a parent but with preparation, support and foresight we can be our children's best ally and biggest champion.

<https://collins.co.uk/pages/supporting-transition-from-ks3-to-gcse>