



Year 7: Learning How to Learn

A parent guide to this year's Achieve Excellence Programme focus

This year your child is building the foundations every later study skill depends on: understanding how memory works, learning to test themselves rather than just re-read, making notes in their own words, staying organised, and understanding that ability grows with effort. These ideas are taught explicitly in form time across the year, in short weekly sessions rather than all at once.

What Year 7 pupils are learning

- How memory works and why we forget — and why effortful recall (not re-reading) is what makes learning stick.
- Retrieval practice — testing yourself with a quiz or a brain-dump, rather than passively reviewing notes.
- Dual coding — making notes in their own words, combined with simple diagrams or visuals, instead of copying.
- Getting organised — managing equipment, workspace and homework records.
- What makes good homework — understanding the task, doing their best work, checking it, and handing in on time.
- Growth mindset and resilience — understanding that the brain grows stronger with effort, and that mistakes are part of learning.

How you can help at home

- **Ask them to explain, don't just check the notes:** “Can you teach me what you learned today, without looking?” is one of the most powerful things you can say — it's retrieval practice in disguise.
- **Praise effort and strategy, not just results:** “You stuck with that” builds resilience more than “you're so clever.”
- **Encourage self-testing over re-reading:** flashcards, quizzes, or covering the page and writing what they remember all beat highlighting and re-reading.
- **Help keep homework visible:** a simple shared list or planner at home reduces the “I forgot” moments while these habits are still new.
- **Normalise mistakes:** if something feels hard, that's a sign they're learning, not a sign they can't do it.

Useful phrase for this year

“What helped you remember this last time?”

When this comes up in form time

Fresh-start units on memory and retrieval run through September and October; organisation and homework habits are covered in the autumn term; growth mindset and resilience are revisited in November and December. Every Monday, Year 7 also spends 15 minutes building a simple weekly study timetable together with their tutor.