



# Year 8: Building Memory & Retrieval

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

Year 8 builds directly on the memory and retrieval foundations from Year 7. This year the aim is to make retrieval practice a genuine habit — something your child chooses to do, not something they're told to do — and to introduce spacing out review over time rather than cramming.

## What Year 8 pupils are learning

- Consolidating retrieval — making self-testing a routine, and knowing when to use it.
- Spaced learning — understanding why spreading practice out over days and weeks beats cramming, and planning simple spaced reviews.
- Self-quizzing and flashcards done well — building flashcards that genuinely test recall, not just copy notes, and quizzing themselves and others.
- Elaboration — explaining how and why something works, and linking new ideas to what they already know.
- Growth mindset in practice — applying effort and strategy deliberately, and responding constructively to setbacks.

## How you can help at home

- **Ask “when did you last review this?”**: this nudges them toward spacing their practice rather than leaving everything until the night before.
- **Test them from their own flashcards**: a five-minute quiz together is genuinely useful revision, not just a favour to you.
- **Ask “why” and “how” questions**: “Why does that work?” or “How does that connect to what you learned last week?” encourages elaboration.
- **Model bouncing back from setbacks**: talk openly about times you found something difficult and what you did next.

## Useful phrase for this year

*“Which retrieval method helps you remember most?”*

## When this comes up in form time

Retrieval and spacing are taught explicitly from September, with a growth mindset unit in November and December. Every Monday, Year 8 builds a weekly study timetable with their tutor, choosing retrieval methods and spacing reviews across the week.