



Year 9: Planning & Reflecting

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

Year 9 is where pupils start taking real ownership of how they study. Building on solid retrieval habits from Years 7 and 8, this year introduces mixing topics together (interleaving) and thinking explicitly about their own thinking (metacognition) — planning an approach, checking if it's working, and adjusting it.

What Year 9 pupils are learning

- Interleaving — mixing topics and question types during study, rather than practising one thing at a time, because it builds stronger, more flexible understanding.
- Metacognition (plan–monitor–evaluate) — planning an approach to a task, checking whether it's working, and adjusting it.
- Reflecting after assessments — analysing what went well and what to change, not just noting the grade.
- Exam-room skills (introduction) — reading questions carefully, planning answers, and managing time.
- Building a weekly system of review — maintaining an independent routine across all their subjects.

How you can help at home

- **Ask about the plan, not just the grade:** “What worked well last time, and why?” matters more after a test than the mark itself.
- **Encourage mixed practice:** if they're revising, suggest switching between subjects or topics rather than drilling one thing for hours.
- **Ask them to check their own progress:** “How will you know you're on track?” builds the self-monitoring habit that underpins independent learning.
- **Support a weekly routine:** a consistent time each week for review, even briefly, helps the habit stick.

Useful phrase for this year

“What can you change before your next test, not after?”

When this comes up in form time

Interleaving and metacognition are introduced in the autumn term, with reflection units following each assessment window (including KS3 mocks in the spring and summer terms). Every Monday, Year 9 plans independently on a blank weekly grid, interleaving subjects and reviewing the previous week first.