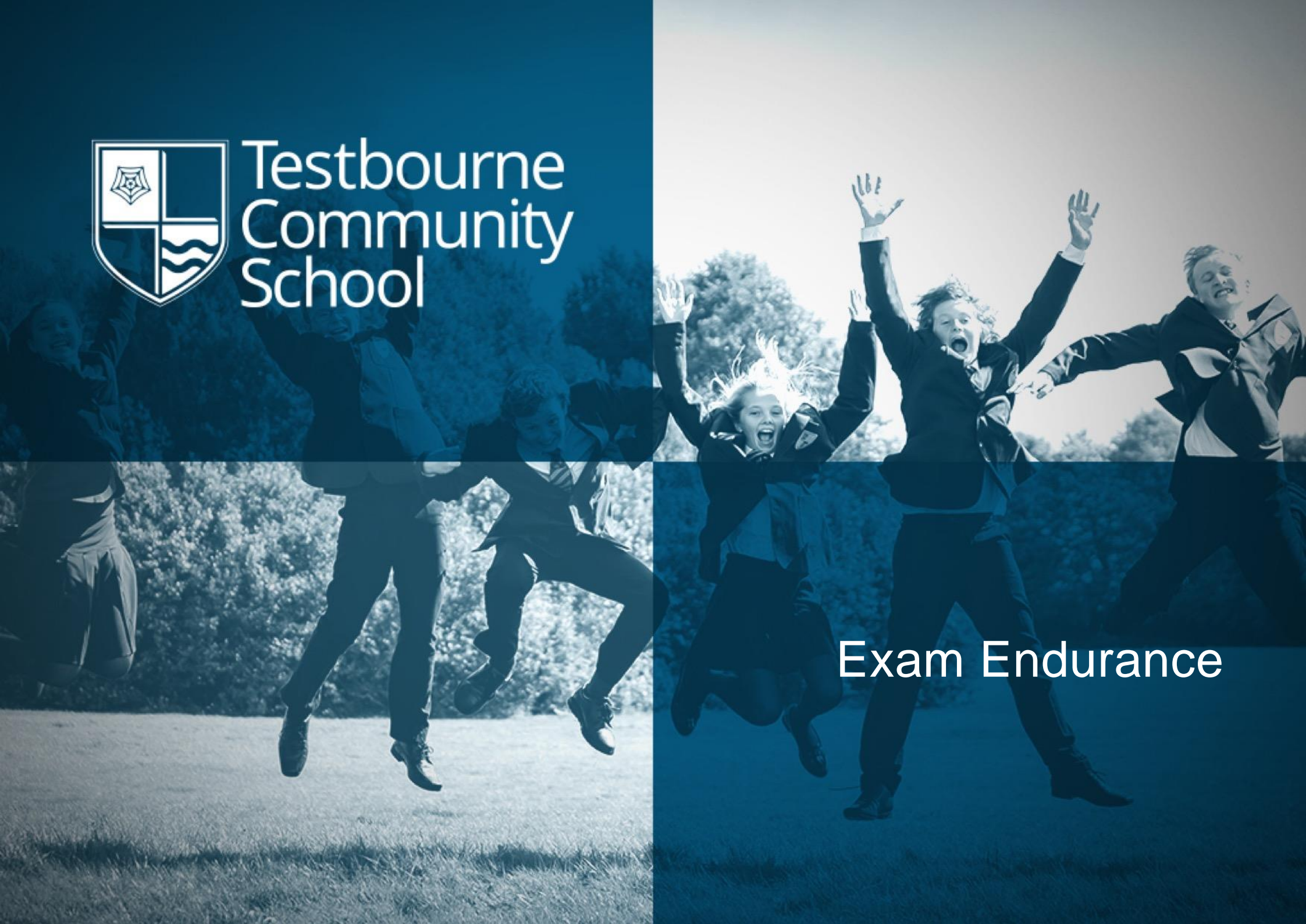




Testbourne
Community
School



Exam Endurance

Performance: it's all in the preparation

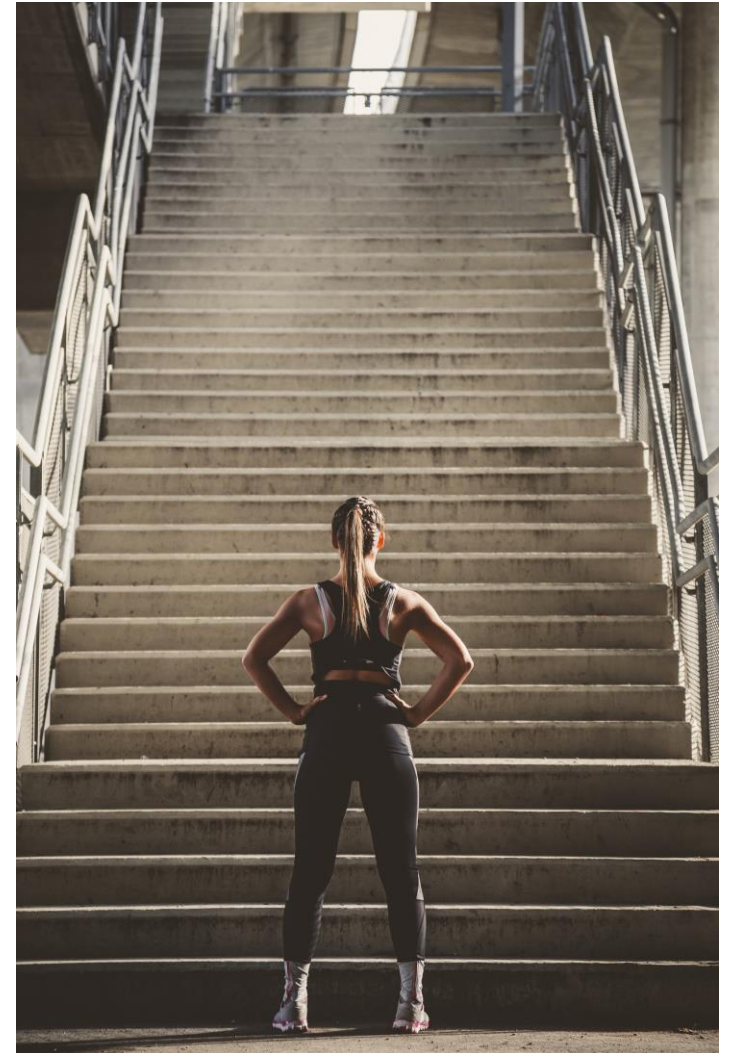
'There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work and learning from failure.'

Colin Powell

What factors affect our ability to perform?

We talk a lot about the ‘content’ that you need to perform i.e. the content knowledge, the exam technique etc.

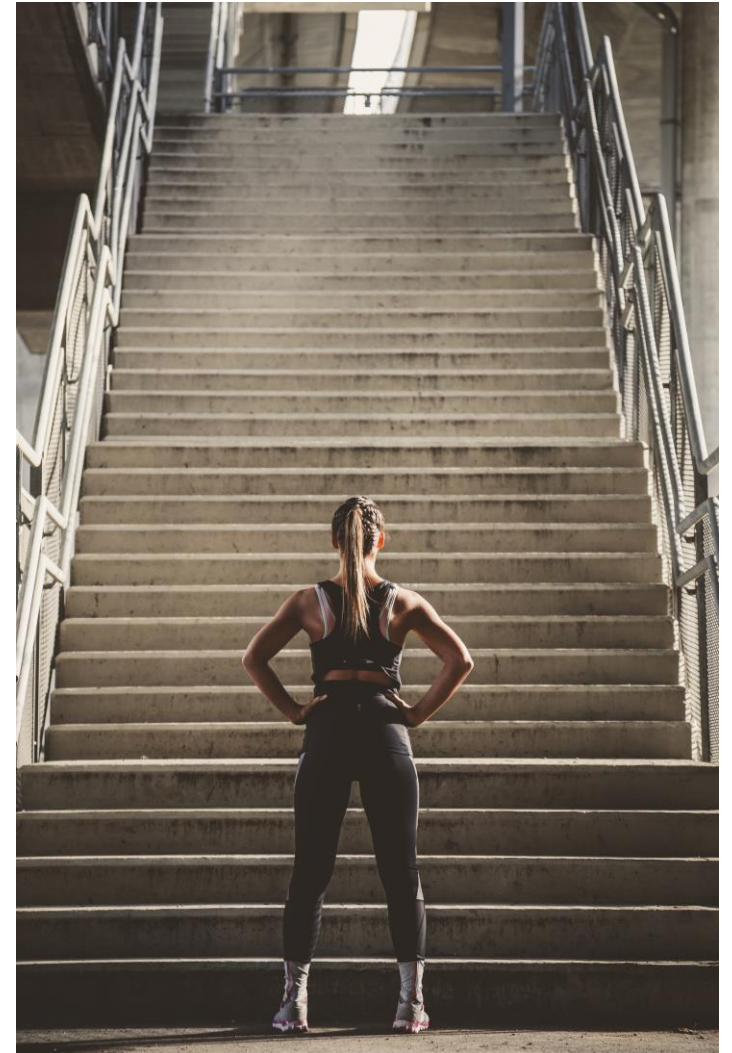
There are so many things that influence a performance though and, to be the best, all of these factors need to be worked on – not just revision.



What factors affect our ability to perform?

- Sleep
- Nutrition
- Stress Management

If you get these right, this will give you another competitive advantage



‘Sleep is that golden chain that ties health and our bodies together.’

Thomas Dekker

Why is sleep important?

If we don't get enough sleep, we risk reducing our:

- decision-making skills
- memory
- concentration and efficiency
- alertness
- awareness and ability to respond effectively to situations
- reaction and thinking times.

• <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLwEQhAjHhM>

‘Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.’

Hippocrates



We are always told that ‘eating well’ is important – but why?

Nutrition, quite literally, powers us to perform.

We may feel that we are working our hardest to achieve our goals, but if we are not fuelling our bodies in the best way then we aren't going to perform at our best.

Nutrition: Power to Perform

Preparation

Energy levels

Re-hydrate

Focus fuels

Omega 3s

Re-think brain blockers

Macro-nutrients

Nutrition: Power to Perform

– Preparation

The best preparation for the day is to have a healthy breakfast.

- Slow-release carbohydrates, such as porridge, whole grain bread or muesli
- Add proteins to keep you fuller for longer, for example milk, yoghurt or eggs if you have time!
- If you aren't a 'breakfast person' experiment with smoothie recipes that use oats and protein-rich ingredients which may be easier to stomach!

Nutrition: Power to Perform

– Energy levels

Keep energy stable by eating regularly throughout the day – aim for 3 healthy meals and 2 healthy snacks.

Avoid energy highs and lows that come from high sugar or caffeine food and drinks.

Nutrition: Power to Perform

– Re-hydrate

Aim to drink at least **2 litres of water** everyday to help us think faster, remain focused and ensure our brains have enough energy to function.

A great way to start your day is drinking water with fresh lemon in. Carry a bottle around so that you can re-hydrate throughout the day.

Nutrition: Power to Perform

– Focus fuels

Snacks are a great way to fuel our bodies continuously throughout the day with brain boosting foods.

Some delicious snacks that can help power our brains are:

- fresh and dried fruit
- nuts
- seeds
- peanut butter and rice cakes
- non-sugary popcorn
- 0% fat yoghurt
- avocado
- a small amount of dark chocolate.

Nutrition: Power to Perform

– Omega 3s

Research has shown that Omega 3 helps our brains to function and can increase our levels of concentration. It also helps to improve our immune system when our bodies and minds are stressed.

The best source of Omega 3 is oily fish such as mackerel, salmon, sardines and trout. Other sources are:

- walnuts
- chia seeds (great for adding into baked cakes!)
- spinach
- eggs
- cod liver oil tablets.

Nutrition: Power to Perform

– Re-think brain blockers

When you have tests or examinations, try to avoid:

- foods made with white flour which require extra time and energy to digest
- foods that are high in refined sugar that will lead to energy highs and crashes
- sugary and fizzy energy drinks and limit caffeine as these can increase nervousness
- turkey because it contains L-tryptophan, an amino acid that makes you feel sleepy
- heavy carbohydrate meals that can make you feel sluggish

Nutrition: Power to Perform

– Macro-nutrients

On exam days, try to make sure that your diet has a combination of protein, fat and carbohydrates at every meal.

- Protein provides amino acids that create dopamine and norepinephrine chemicals which help increase how alert, attentive and energetic you are.
- Fats help keep you full for longer and to help stabilise your blood sugar levels.
- Complex carbohydrates turn into glucose to fuel your brain, as well as to create serotonin to help you remain calm and help foster a positive mindset.



CHILLI CON CARNE WITH JEWELLED RICE



CHICKPEA AND VEGETABLE CURRY



A DIFFERENT FISH FINGER SANDWICH



MEXICAN CHICKEN ENCHILADAS



PEANUT CHICKEN AND NOODLES



FLORENTINE PIZZA



What is stress?

Stress is a state of mental or emotional strain or tension, caused by adverse or demanding circumstances.



The Mindful Unplug

- Unplug from technology everyday at least an hour or two before bedtime.
- Unplug yourself from the busy world and get out into the fresh air everyday.
- Unplug yourself from phones and other distractions when you're revising.



How to cope with stress

<https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/articles/zsvcqhv>

When you are feeling the stress, get talking.

- Remind yourself that a certain amount of stress is motivation. Use the emotion to improve your performance
- Talk to friends. They're there to help. Talking to them will help you realise you're not alone and they'll give you support.
- Talk to your teachers or parents. They will have a different perspective to you. They can help you problem solve and find practical solutions.
- Take regular breaks
- Revise with friends. This can be great as you keep up your social life and you don't feel isolated and alone.
- Practice mindfulness and concentrate on your breathing. To find out more about mindfulness click on the link below.