



Exam Anxiety - Invigilator Guidance

Invigilation isn't just about ensuring the security of the exam, it is also about providing the best environment possible to enable the student to perform to the best of their ability.

Many students suffer from Exam Anxiety to such an extent that it affects their performance. Helping students manage their anxieties means they will perform better, which in turn has a positive effect on your Centre's results.

As invigilators, you are a very important part of this process.

Activity

- I want you to think of anything you want except blue monkeys.
- DO NOT THINK OF BLUE MONKEYS.
- What are you thinking about? BLUE MONKEYS!
- If I hadn't even mentioned blue monkeys would you have thought of them?

This is the power of language. Think of BLUE MONKEYS as a negative thought. If it hadn't been mentioned you wouldn't have thought about it. Some people feel we have to reinforce the importance of the exams at every opportunity using negative language and dire consequences of failing. We are always warning children using negative language:

- 'Careful you don't fall off that wall!'
- 'Mind you don't hurt yourself!'
- 'Maths isn't your thing is it?'
- 'You're not going to pass if you don't revise.'

This negative thinking puts the thought of what we don't want to happen in their head.

Instead we could say:

- 'You are walking so carefully along that wall, well done!'
- 'I love the way you are doing that safely!'
- 'Well done for working hard at Maths.'
- 'Revision is going to help your grades and show us what you can really do.'

Which would you like said to you? Negative thoughts can become well-worn thought pathways in our brains. How we think affects how we feel. How we feel affects how we behave. How we behave has consequences which can sometimes reinforce the original negative thought. It all starts with the thought - much better positive than negative!

How can you help?

Do - Positive:

- Be as subtle as possible when dealing with an individual.
- Use positive language.
- Speak quietly to individual students.
- Smile at the students.

Don't - Negative

- Don't draw attention to them in front of others.
- Don't continually stare at the same students; especially from a location they can make eye contact with you.
- Don't make the candidate feel as if they are asking an awkward question.
- Don't pace up and down the rows unnecessarily.
- Don't rush, once a student is in the exam room and supervised they are secure. The exam does not have to start on the dot.

Thank you for your help in helping our students achieve their very best.