

# Media Bio – Emily Hughes

**Founder of The Parent Guide and Author of ‘GCSE Survival Guide for Parents’  
Qualified Teacher with over 15 years experience**

***On a mission to make the school years less stressful for parents too!***

Bio for consideration for.... \*Advice \*Expert Comment \* Interviews \* Case Study Features \* Q&As \* Author Profiles

40 year-old mum of 19 year-old twins and a 12 year-old daughter; Emily Hughes from Peterborough is a qualified teacher with over 15 years experience teaching maths, including time as head of maths and as a lead practitioner. With a passion for education and direct experience of exam-sitting kids, Emily is perfectly placed to mentor parents from *helpless to hopeful* in supporting their own children through these most stressful of academic years.

In 2014, Emily’s mental health was severely affected when a new head teacher arrived in her school and instead of feeling supported and encouraged in such a stressful, high-pressured role, she found her confidence ebbing away.



“I love teaching, but I fell out of love with the classroom,” she says. This led to Emily experiencing depression following work-based stress, and she quit without anything lined up but she knew she needed time for her. Emily said; “With the support of my husband, I knew that for this next season, I had to get out of traditional teaching, so I quit, because **my sanity was more important than my salary.**”

After some much needed time out, Emily knew that it was important to put her nurturing, supportive skills and educational know-how to good use. As someone who had always dreamt of being a teacher, having volunteered at her local primary school weekly when she was still a teen, to leaving Cambridge University and getting her first job in a thriving school as soon as she graduated, Emily still wanted to help others navigate the education system and enjoy and thrive in their learning.

For some time, fellow colleagues had looked enviously at classroom posters Emily had designed, and when she was signed off with depression she was inspired by her parents to take her first steps on her own with a “side hustle” selling her brilliant designs on line. “It was a small step,” says Emily, “but this helped me realise I could use my experience, skills and knowledge in a different way.”

Together with husband, Paul, also a teacher, Emily then went on to set up [www.Formtimesorted.com](http://www.Formtimesorted.com), a website for secondary form tutors/teachers, full of resources for teachers to alleviate some of the pressures of everyday form time and extra-curricular expectations. Emily said; “We priced it on the low side and in effect we had our next hustle, and all the time I could start to see a way out.”

The inspiration for the Parent Guide came when another parent posted on social media, asking for help with some maths homework, Emily said; “As a mum of teenage twins myself, the penny dropped and I realised at that moment that *no-one was helping the parents.*” This is when Emily embarked on her mission to help make the school years less stressful for parents too!

Emily now runs Parent Guide full-time; this is an online membership platform that combines all the information and tools that parents need to get through the exam years. Members receive weekly advice in bite-sized chunks so that they have all they need to help their child succeed. Q&A sessions each month tackle more specific issues. “It’s a bit like having a teacher on tap!” Says Emily, “We break down the academic knowhow, the learning skills, and the mindset tips they need, and blend them up with a little bit of psychology so that they *stick.*”

When the pandemic hit and education was impacted like never before, Emily wanted to ensure she was supporting parents who were now home-schooling and had all the additional pressures of working from home. Paul and Emily hosted virtual lessons together, teaching life skills like financial literacy and producing a home learning timetable with suggested videos and resources that students could use.

**Emily also became a trusted go-to expert sharing her thoughts on GCSE results day 2020 on BBC, the Good Morning Britain sofa and many other media outlets.**

“There’s no manual for being a parent and during the last year, the demand on us to be teacher/parent/breadwinner has been more than some of us can cope with,” says Emily. “Add to that the various government announcements about education and stress levels went through the roof.”

“We used Facebook to help interpret what the government was saying when everything was so turbulent and I used it to share my expertise and thoughts. Our audience grew overnight, receiving over 80,000 views and our Facebook page continues to be a source of information for many across England.”

In July 2020, Emily authored the successful ‘GCSE Survival Guide for Parents’ - this was well received by parents across England and endorsed by many well-known mums including;

***TV Presenter and Hollyoaks-star Terri Dwyer who said; “This book is an easy read; a how-to manual to navigate the hormones and complexity of your teenager and a coping tool for the looming GCSEs. How to avoid the pitfalls and encourage your child in a supportive (and not irritating) way.”***

***And Strictly Come Dancing presenter, Claudia Winkleman, who said; “I’ve been through parenting and GCSEs and we genuinely need all the help we can get.”***

***Ackley Bridge star, Sunetra Sarker, who has a son and step-daughter doing GCSEs said; “I wish I’d read your book sooner.”***

**Specialisms to Comment on:** Teaching, Education System, GCSEs, A-levels, exams, revision, education, parents evening, schools, catching up post-COVID, results day, parenting teenagers...

Depression, Work-based stress, anxiety, surviving not thriving, leaving my job, my sanity was more important than my salary, setting up a business, enterprise, mums in business, family business...

## **Emily's Personal Story**

Emily grew up in Peterborough in a tight knit, loving and supportive family. The eldest of three children, her parents stressed the importance of looking out for others and she remembers having a spare sofa bed available for any friends who were in need. Emily's father started his own business when she was a teenager. She was inspired by his journey of entrepreneurship with G7th Capos (used by Ed Sheeran and Eric Clapton), started and still managed largely from his garage in Peterborough!

Emily attended her local comprehensive school, one that she remembers as having "the worst reputation in the city!" – she said; "I was always pretty good academically, and I knew very early on that I wanted to be a teacher. My school finished early on a Friday, so I used to go and help out in my old primary school each week for the afternoon."

Emily then applied for university, "I applied to Cambridge on a whim, never really dreaming it would happen, but all the extra-curricular activities supporting my application landed me a spot on the course. I always felt a bit out of place socially – I'm not your traditional Cambridge student!"

"I started teaching straight after uni. In fact, my husband and I started at the same school on the same day (although we were both married to other people at the time!)"

"I spent 15 years working my way through the ranks, working hard to be taken seriously as a young woman. In my first head of department job, I ended up in charge of my old Key Stage 3 (KS3) maths teacher and my A-level maths teacher, which was very strange – lucky, I was a good student!"

However, this all changed when Emily's new boss arrived in school and instead of feeling supported and encouraged she found her confidence ebbing away and her mental health took a knock. "He was really critical," she remembers. "During the Christmas holidays, I was so miserable I couldn't enjoy anything, and my husband suggested I should take some time off. As soon as I gave myself permission to 'stop coping', I broke. I knew I had been surviving, not thriving for a couple of months."

In 2014, Emily went to see her Doctor and was signed off with depression, unable to even get off the sofa.

"I tried all the self help methods initially; getting outside for walks, eating healthily, meditation and relaxation and these are all good things I carry forward, but at the time, I really needed some extra help. The doc prescribed antidepressants and I just took one day at a time."

With the love and support of her friends and family, Emily started to recuperate and knew that things had started to change for the better when she could smile at people because she wanted to, not because she felt she had to.

“I remember doing the school run and feeling like I could take my hoodie down, look people in the eye and smile. I knew I didn’t want to hide any more. It was just step by step, and this experience has truly enabled me to empathise with parents and teachers who seek me out now. I know what it’s like to be overwhelmed but we’re here to alleviate that!”

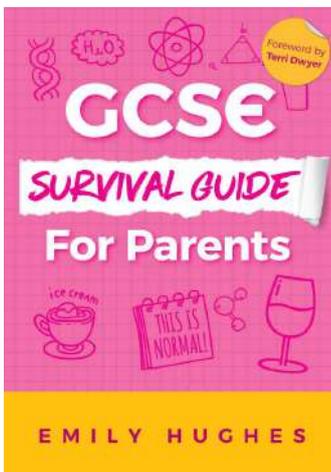
“After I got better, I started a new job with high hopes, only to discover that my new boss was just as bad,” she says. “Everyone else was leaving, so it wasn’t just me, but I could feel myself teetering on the edge of breaking again. I looked for other jobs, but there wasn’t anything.” Emily was so anxious about history repeating itself, that she handed in her notice without another job to go to. “It reached the point where I decided my sanity was more important than my salary, and I quit!”

Emily knew that it was important to her to put her nurturing, supportive skills and educational know-how to good use – she was passionate about helping others navigate the education system and enjoy and thrive at learning.

Emily is on a mission to support parents with knowledge over nagging! Serving a broad customer base of families who are keen to make the most of education.

In July 2020, Emily authored the successful ‘GCSE Survival Guide for Parents’.

## **Book - ‘GCSE Survival Guide for Parents’**



In July 2020, Emily authored the successful ‘GCSE Survival Guide for Parents’ - this was well received by parents across England and endorsed by many well-known mums including; TV Presenter and Hollyoaks-star Terri Dwyer who said; ***“This book is an easy read; a how-to manual to navigate the hormones and complexity of your teenager and a coping tool for the looming GCSEs. How to avoid the pitfalls and encourage your child in a supportive (and not irritating) way.”***

And Strictly Come Dancing presenter, Claudia Winkleman, who said; “I’ve been through parenting and GCSEs and we genuinely need all the help we can get.”

Ackley Bridge star, Sunetra Sarker who has a son and step-daughter doing GCSEs said; “I wish I’d read your book sooner.”

Emily is planning to write the **Post-16 Survival Guide For Parents** after the success of this first book.

## **Parent Guide**

Parent Guide is a membership support and resources platform for parents to support their kids through these most troublesome years, helping busy, proactive parents keep abreast of educational information and expectations and providing practical academic support so that children thrive in school and at home.

Emily said; “We empower parents to support their children from a place of knowledge, not nagging, so that they can make it through the exam years intact! We offer a membership, revision aids and mentoring and consultation packages for when a more personal touch is needed.”

“You know when you first become a parent you have antenatal groups, or mums and tots? There’s so much support and we don’t think that should stop just because they’re older! Teenagers can be tougher than toddlers, and just as prone to tantrums,” says Emily, “and parents need all the help they can get.”

“There’s help everywhere for students, from revision guides to tutors to online programmes but there’s *not much* for parents who just want to help their child and understand exactly what’s happening at every stage of their schooling. 5 minutes at parents evening just isn’t enough to cut it, and teenagers aren’t known for telling their parents everything that’s happening!”

**In a poll conducted by *Parent Guide* over 90% of parents responded to say they felt overwhelmed or worried about supporting their child with their GCSEs.**

“Parent Guide exists so that parents can access all the tools and information they need to feel confident they’re ready for anything exams throw at them. We want to help parents feel confident supporting their children, not just with the academic side of school, but also with the mindset and the skillset to succeed at GCSE, Post-16 and beyond,” says Emily. “We’ve seen the pressure that students are under in our education system, and this is our way of changing education from the outside in. Parents make the difference.”

The stats bear out Emily’s experience in the teaching profession and from her sought-after skills. A survey of 1500 parents, carried out by Parentkind, found that 93% were either quite concerned or very concerned about their child’s preparedness for exams such as GCSEs and A-Levels next year and 55% of adults admitted to being unable to answer sample GCSE questions. **The popular Mumsnet site revealed that 2 in 5 parents said that not knowing how to help their children with revision made them feel they were not good enough as parents and more than 52% would like more help and advice on how to support their children through their revision.**

As a parent and former teacher, with a degree in Maths and Education from Cambridge University Emily brings a wealth of experience to Parents Guide.

Parent Guide combines all the information and tools that parents need to get through the exam years. Members receive weekly advice in bite-sized chunks so that they have all they need to help their child succeed. Q&A sessions each month tackle more specific issues. "It's a bit like having a teacher on tap!" says Emily, "We break down the academic knowhow, the learning skills, and the mindset tips they need, and blend them up with a little bit of psychology so that they *stick*."

This is done via;

- ❖ Membership Support
- ❖ Revision Aids
- ❖ 1-1 Mentoring and Consultation
- ❖ The Parent Guide book - 'GCSE Survival Guide for Parents', published 1st July 2020
- ❖ Online courses

Plans for the future include opening up a Key Stage 3 (age 11-13) membership option, and eventually covering all stages of education from reception to Year 13.

Emily is also planning to write the Post-16 Survival Guide For Parents after the success of her first book, *GCSE Survival Guide For Parents*.

## **Credentials and Qualifications**

- MA (Cantab) in Mathematics with Education from Cambridge University.
- Head of maths and Lead Practitioner for maths
- PGCE

## **Appearances**

- Guest expert on Good Morning Britain on GCSE results day 2020. **Good Morning Britain:**  
[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=2764471523809735&id=1400749483515286](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2764471523809735&id=1400749483515286)
- **Independent School Parent:**  
<https://www.independentschoolparent.com/promotion/5-strategies-for-remote-gcse-success/>
- **BBC Radio 5 Live & BBC Radio 2:** For comment
- **BBC Look East:** Guest expert, remote learning.
- **BBC Radio Cambridgeshire:** Guest expert, BBC breakfast time.



## **Testimonial**

*“Parents guide to GCSEs is fantastic! Paul and Emily have been telling us stuff we didn't even know we needed to know, and helping our responsible, bright Y11 feel on top of things. She wants to do well and deserves to and it feels like we can now help ensure her work is consistently useful and gets results.”*

*“My Year 11 daughter didn't know where to start and nor did I! I saw a FB post about 'GCSE Survival Guide for Parents' and listened to Emily on a video making a whole lot of sense. I then asked her for a few bits of advice, not really expecting to hear anything, but I was so wrong! Within seconds, she pinged me back with so many helpful bits of advice. She was and still is such a brilliant sounding board.”*

*“She is not only an experienced teacher but a parent of teens herself and I really found her very approachable with a 'nothing is too much trouble' approach absolutely fantastic [...] Their no nonsense but completely relatable advice was brilliant and I was amazed at how receptive my daughter was. Whatever happened, it was transformative and really turned a corner for us.*

*“The fortnightly Q&A sessions are a godsend! I have also found the weekly chunks of advice drip fed throughout the year to be completely invaluable. I don't feel overwhelmed, I feel like we're ahead of the game.*

*“Being a member has completely taken the strain off me and I genuinely haven't had to be that nagging Mum I thought I was destined to be in this whole process. It's been quite incredible! I would wholeheartedly recommend the membership to anyone!”*

## **For more information:**

- Blog: <https://www.parentguidetogcse.com/blog/>
- Podcast: The podcast: <https://www.parentguidetogcse.com/category/podcast/>
- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/parentguidetogcse>
- Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/parentguidetogcse/>

**For media enquiries, to arrange interviews, or request comment please contact:**

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