PREMIUM MATHS TUTORING · MONTHLY PROGRESS

Maya Whitlock — August 2026

GCSE Maths (Edexcel Higher) · Prepared for Mrs Whitlock · Tutor: Noah

THE MONTH IN SHORT

Quadratics have properly clicked this month: factorising, completing the square and the formula are all now automatic rather than something to look up mid-question. A full past-paper section under timed conditions to close out the month came back at 17/20, up from a 4/10 topic test at the start of August.

WHAT WE COVERED

5 SESSIONS TAUGHT

DATE	TIME	WHAT WE COVERED
Mon 3 Aug	18:00	Factorising quadratics. We went back to basics, starting from why two brackets multiply out to give a quadratic in the first place, rather than jumping straight to the shortcut. Maya had been guessing pairs of numbers somewhat randomly before this, so we built a habit of listing factor pairs of the constant term systematically and checking the sum against the middle coefficient every time. By the end of the session she was factorising simple quadratics with a positive leading coefficient without hesitation, and we flagged negative coefficients and non-unitary leading terms as next week's stretch.
Mon 10 Aug	18:00	Completing the square. This session built directly on last week: we took factorising as far as it could go, then introduced completing the square as the tool for quadratics that do not factor neatly. Maya struggled initially with the halving-then-squaring step, so we slowed right down and worked through it geometrically, literally drawing the square being completed, which made the algebra click. She can now convert a quadratic into completed-square form independently and, more usefully, explain what the resulting numbers tell you about the graph's turning point.
Mon 17 Aug	18:00	The quadratic formula. With two other methods under her belt, we introduced the formula as the reliable fallback when nothing else works cleanly. The real work this session was substitution discipline: Maya was losing marks to sign errors when a or c were negative, so we drilled a consistent routine of writing out a, b and c on a separate line before touching the formula itself. Her accuracy on substitution-heavy practice questions improved visibly across the session, from roughly half right to nearly all correct by the final set.

DATE	TIME	WHAT WE COVERED
Mon 24 Aug	18:00	Mixed exam questions. This was a deliberately mixed session, exam-style questions with no hint about which method to use, to test whether Maya could choose for herself rather than defaulting to the formula out of habit. She is now reliably spotting when a quadratic factors at a glance and reaching for that first, which saves real time in a timed paper. The one gap that showed up is two-step problems where a quadratic sits inside a longer question, which is exactly what the final session's past-paper set was built to target.
Mon 31 Aug	18:00	Full past-paper consolidation. We closed out the quadratics block with a complete past-paper section under timed conditions, deliberately mixing all three methods so Maya had to choose for herself under exam pressure rather than being cued by the previous week's topic. She scored 17/20, with both dropped marks coming from the same two-step question type flagged the week before, so that is now the one loose end to carry into next month rather than a live gap in method. A strong close to four weeks of consistent work and a solid base to build from going into simultaneous equations.

SETTLE UP

Billed as a simple weekly amount of £35, set up once after the free first lesson and collected automatically, so there is never an invoice to chase. This month: 5 lessons (3, 10, 17, 24 & 31 Aug) = **£175**, spread across five weekly payments 😌 .

WHERE SHE IS SHINING

- Full past-paper score up from 4/10 to 17/20 across the month.
- Chooses the quickest method for a question rather than defaulting to the formula every time.

THE HABIT WE ARE BUILDING

> *"Check the discriminant before you commit to a method."*

Still occasionally starts factorising before checking it factors cleanly. Next month's focus is building that check into the first few seconds of every question, starting with the two-step problems the final paper flagged.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Move on to simultaneous equations next month.
- Keep drilling two-step problems where a quadratic sits inside a longer question.