

## Dear Parents

We hope that SfA advice sheets are helping you to support your child while they are at home. Please let your child's school know what you think and if they could be improved.

This week we are talking about what to do if your child doesn't want to learn at home. Children are used to learning at school, not at home and it can be difficult for them to work when they may want to play. So don't worry if you have this problem. *Try our tips and don't give up!*

### How to help children to work at home:

1. Have a routine that works for everybody.
2. Allow children to be comfortable and to move.
3. Tasks shouldn't be too long or too difficult.
4. Talk to your child about how they learn and the task they are doing.
5. Praise hard work and make it fun!

## How to make sure that children enjoy learning at home:

### 1. Children only need to sit at a table to write.

Most children find it difficult to sit still for long and they only need to sit at a table to write. When reading, or doing other learning, if they are comfortable and work well somewhere else, that is fine!

### 2. Allow children to move if they wish.

Young children need to move. If they can't move, they find it difficult to concentrate and to learn. Allow your child to move from one place to another if they want. Give them quick exercise breaks every 30 minutes or so (for example, jumping on the spot, stretching, touching their knee to their elbow).

### 3. Understand how long a child can stay on one task.

Young children can often only concentrate on a task for short periods of time. Nursery and Reception

children may only be able to concentrate on one task for 5-10 minutes, while Year 5 and 6 children can focus for up to 40 minutes on tasks that interest them. They will need short breaks from work.

### 4. Ask your child what helps them to work well at school.

Everybody is slightly different in the way they learn, and your child is an expert in how they learn, so ask them what works best for them.

### 5. Don't expect your child to know the answer right away.

Reading is not like Maths, where there is usually one correct answer. When children answer questions about what they have read they are often asked to say what they think or to look for clues hidden in the story. At school children always talk about the book with their classmates and their teacher. You can help your child to understand and answer questions well by reading the book too and talking about it with them.

It is the same with writing, at school children talk through what they are going to write and how they will write it before they start. It is important to do this at home too.

### 6. Make it fun and motivate them!

Make learning fun and give a simple reward for working hard to learn. This could be a favourite game or reading a book together. It is best not to use food as a reward.

**Remember to keep learning fun and praise children when they work hard. If there is a problem, talk to them about what would make it easier for them.**

We'd love our @successforall schools to share their home learning! Why not ask your parents to include us in your Tweets?



### Nursery and Reception Children

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4. Talk to your child about how they learn and the task they are doing.
5. Praise hard work and make it fun!

#### **Talk to your children:**

'Think out loud-talk': (e.g. verbalise your thinking) to your child about what you're doing and when you're doing it, that way they will begin to match what they hear to the object or the action that you're talking about.

#### **Extend children's vocabulary:**

*Label items:* Labelling items throughout the day will help children to learn the names of objects. Once your child is using single words, they will begin to try adding two words together. You can support this by adding a word onto this e.g. if a child points and says "flower" you can respond with "This is a pretty flower". This encourages children to start building vocabulary then ask them to write their idea in a sentence using capital letters and full stops.

#### **Read to and with your child:**

*Rhymes and rhyme-times:* Rhyming helps children to break words down and to hear the sounds that make up words in preparation for reading and writing. So why not sing songs and have a rhyme time with children every day e.g.

*Twinkle, twinkle, little star  
How I wonder what you are,  
Up above the world so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky, twinkle, twinkle, little star  
How I wonder what you are.*

Try making up your own songs and rhymes and use rhymes with actions.

#### **Phonics/Blending:**

You need to keep practising all the alphabet sounds. As suggested in the previous advice sheet, it is best to focus on 1-3 new sounds at a time. When they can do this, children need to go from saying the individual sounds of each letter to being able to blend the sounds and say the whole word e.g. with the word 'tin' rather than saying three separate sounds /t/i/n/ link the sounds together and say the whole word in one go. You can focus on blending e.g. cab, dab, gab, jab, lab, nab, tab.

#### **Maths:**

Have a bag containing the numerals from 0 - 10 written on separate pieces of paper. Pull out a numeral and combine it with a task for your child to do e.g. if you pull out a 2, your child could take 2 giant strides or 2 tiptoes, do 2 jumps, run to a hoop (or create one) and back twice, find 2 objects and bring them back etc. *You could extend the activity by increasing the size of the numerals, e.g. up to 20 and adding one more than and one less than.*

#### **Physical Development:**

*Hide and Seek:* Depending on your space, this can be indoor or outdoor and could be hiding yourself or an object. For younger ones it's great to support them with hot and cold directions. When they get caught, they can freeze their position to see how well they can balance!

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