

Home Learning Advice – General No.4

15th May 2020



Dear Parents

Over the past few weeks we have talked about how to engage your child in learning. This time we will give more pointers on how to help your child to work hard and do their best.

What motivates children to work?

Everybody needs to feel that there is a purpose to what they do, children are just the same. So, children need to understand that you care that they work hard. There are several ways you can do this.

Set expectations

To care about their work, children, need to know what is expected of them for each task, so it is important that you tell them before they start a task. If you would like them to read a certain number of pages or to write a certain amount, then tell them before they begin. Remember this needs to be at the right level for their age and their reading and writing skills.

'Complete tasks'

Children will know this behaviour from school where they understand that completing tasks is an important part of learning. Tell them what you want them to do and what you expect a 'completed task' to look like. Be as clear as possible and discuss any difficulties they may have with them before they start.

Provide some support as they work

If your child seems to have lost interest in their task, it may well be because they need some help. Children can sometimes find themselves 'stuck' as they work at a task. They might have read a word they don't understand or, if they are writing, they might need help to work out what to write next.

The key here is to ask questions. Ask why they have stopped work, is there a problem, can you help? Then try to help them to take the next step and keep going. Children get this help from their teacher when they are in school and it is important for them to learn.

How to help children to work at home:

1. Have a routine and allow children to be comfortable.
2. Think about sessions and what went well.
3. Tasks shouldn't be too long or too difficult.
4. Talk to your child about how they learn and model behaviour that will help them to learn well.
5. Don't criticise, praise hard work and make it fun!

Feedback is very important

When children work at home, they need to feel that what they have done matters, so it is important that an adult looks at their work and makes them feel valued:

- Check if your child has met your expectations for what you agreed should be a 'completed task'. Praise what they have done to work towards completing the task. If it is not finished, then agree with them what they could do to complete it and ask them to do so.
- If the school has a system for collecting children's work and providing feedback, then please make sure the work is sent to the teacher. Read any feedback from the teacher with your child, discuss everything they did well, and gain some ideas for what they can work to improve next time.
- Children may not be able to send their work to their teacher, so it is very important that **you** give them feedback. It is best to be very positive about what they have done well. Many schools use '**two stars and a wish**'. This is a simple model which means that you would tell your child two things they have done well, and one way they could improve their work next time. For example, "*Your writing has some excellent ideas (first star) and your handwriting is very good (second star), next time please could you try to improve your spelling (a wish)*".

Remember to make this 'wish' part of your expectations when they start their next task and discuss with them how they will achieve the 'wish'.

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



Home Learning Advice – Roots No.4

15th May 2020



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!

Roots Children – Years 1 & 2

Phonics/Letter Sounds: Continue to practise the sounds that letters and groups of letters make. Revisit sounds that you have previously taught and pay particular attention to the sounds that you don't think your child has remembered or can use well. When you are looking at any printed text (online, in recipes, in books etc.) point to the letters and ask what sound they make.

Spelling: Continue with spellings. Remember words that cannot be sounded out are taught by using 'Say-Spell-Say'. Other spellings can be learnt by sounding out the sounds in the words and using the sound to identify the letters. Ask your child to write words from the Shared Stories, other books that you are reading together and other appropriate words that come up in conversation. Remember this can be in chalks outside, in sand, flour, lentils or shaving foam as well as paper and pencil!

Read with your child daily: Continue to read to and have your child read to you for at least 30 minutes each day. Your school will give you access to the Shared Stories your child is reading. Guidance for reading these is found in the document below:



Helping%20your%20child%20to%20learn9

Comprehension: While you are reading together ask many questions about what your child has read to make sure that they have understood it. You can ask questions such as:

- Who were the characters (people and animals) in the story?
- What are the characters doing?
- Where is the story happening?
- What was the problem?
- How do you think the characters feel?
- Why do you think that happened?
- What do you think might happen next?
- What would you have done?

There are some other excellent comprehension questions on the last page of the Shared Stories.

When asking your child these questions ask them to find where the answer is in the text and reread the page/section to get the answer (it is not a memory test). They should then say the answer in a **full sentence**. If they cannot give you a full sentence help them by saying the first part of the sentence. They repeat this and then give the rest of the sentence. For example, if you asked, 'What did the children do at the lake?' and your child answers 'Swimming' say 'At the lake the children....' so that your child can give the whole sentence.

Writing: You can now link your child's writing activities to the comprehension questions that you are asking or to questions in the back of the Shared Stories.

Ask the question, help your child to say the answer (as above). Say the sentence together then have them say the sentence several times (to you, to the wall, to the ceiling, shouting, singing, whispering). Once they have remembered the sentence ask them to write it, one word at a time, reading back the sentence after each word they have written. Remember that the spellings they will use will depend on how much phonics they know. Only help them correct their spellings if you are sure that they are secure with the sounds in that word.

Give your child lots of praise at each stage of the writing that they are doing.