

Tips for helping your child with homework at home

Children are often best working at school where their peers are all also working and striving to get better. However, there is no doubt that children who get support at home with their homework really benefit.



As a school we wanted to share some tips for parents of how to help children with homework.

- 1) **Ensure the child has a quiet space including a table and chair** to complete their homework in. Ideally each sibling child has their own desk space. If you need to move furniture into rooms that don't usually have tables this can be done for longer pieces if you have more than one child.
- 2) **Ensure the child has as quiet a space as possible**, move very young siblings into a different room and ensure there are no distractions like televisions on at the same time as the child is completing homework.
- 3) **Allow children to work independently** but assist by answering one question or explaining every so often if the child is stuck.
- 4) **Let your child play a role in setting the rules**. Make sure that you and your child agree on the set time and place, which can eliminate some of the homework-related dissension between parents and children.
- 5) **Observe your child's homework habits**. Is she stuck on a certain task or is she easily distracted? Does she understand the directions, or is she making the assignment harder than it really is? Is her studying interrupted by television, phone calls, or chatting with other family members? If so, you may need to rethink your homework rules or discuss these difficulties with her teacher.
- 6) **Give positive feedback**. Look over your child's homework on occasion and praise him about all the things he's doing right. If you do find errors, don't criticise. Instead, review his work together and try to pinpoint his area of difficulty.
- 7) **Keep in touch with your child's teacher**. If your child is having ongoing homework problems, such as difficulty understanding what the assignments are or how to complete them, or if he breezes through them as though they were no challenge at all, let his teacher know. The teacher may adjust the assignments so they are more in sync with his capabilities.

Reading

Reading can be done as a more 'cosy' activity on sofas and in bedrooms. Allow your child to use their phonetic knowledge to decode and allow them to struggle a little while doing this rather than telling them the word straight away. Remember - it is OK to read to your child even a page of their own reading book if they are flagging and this gets them going!

Learning Times Tables and Number Bonds

The learning of times tables and number bonds are just as important as formally set homework and will likely have a stronger impact on your child's long term mathematical ability.

- Use 'dead time' such as car travel to fire quick table questions at your child or to play them times table songs with the car's sound system.
- Try the approach of learning one fact very well a day and then keep checking the others learnt.
- Use a cover, write, check approach so the child is physically writing and reading as well as saying the fact.
- Put the fact on a small piece of paper, under your child's pillow or on a wall near their bed, after learning it for the day.
- Then after all these methods keep revisiting older table facts learnt until your child is quick and confident.
- Remember times table facts include relevant division facts so if a child is learning $7 \times 7 = 49$ they must also know that 49 shared by 7 is 7.