

Parents' Guidance: Key Stage 2



Parental engagement with learning and support for their child is one of the most significant factors in a child's development and levels of attainment. As a parent you have tremendous power to strengthen your child's confidence, which is vital to learning.

The following are general hints and tips to think about when supporting your child as they progress through key stage two:

- **Encourage children to observe and talk their surroundings.**
- **Make use of your local library and look out for special events and services for children.**
- **Visit museums and other places you think your child might find interesting.**
- **If you are watching television or listening to the radio with your children, encourage them to talk about what they have seen and heard.**
- **Try to set aside time to work on homework activities with your children.**
- **If possible, provide a reasonably quiet place for your child to do their homework.**
- **Encourage them to discuss any homework with you, including any feedback from the teacher.**

How can I help with reading?



- Give cards to accompany reading books where words not known can be recorded and investigated.
- Read yourself. Set a good example by reading for pleasure and talking about the reading you do at work and home.
- It is great to encourage independent reading; older children still enjoy being read to, both at bed times and at other times during the day.
- Your child does not have to read books alone; newspapers, magazines, comics, TV guides, cookery books and the internet are great too.
- Discuss reading with your child; ask them if there was anything interesting in what they've read recently.
- Ask lots of questions about the story. What would you have done if you were.....? Does this book remind you of any thing that has happened to you? Can you guess what is going to happen next?
- Visit your local library – it's free to join. As well as taking out story books, use visits to the library as a time to find books and CD ROMs about your child's hobbies and interests.
- Encourage your child to read to younger family members and friends.
- Keep in touch with child's school. Make sure your child swaps their home reading books regularly at school and try to make a regular time slot to hear them read.
- Make sure your child has a dictionary to check the meanings of new words they encounter in their reading.

How can I help with writing?



- Be a writing model and encourage your child to write both alongside you and with you. Ask your child help you with letters, lists or forms. This helps your child to see firsthand that writing is important to adults and truly useful throughout everyday life.
- Ensure there are a range of real opportunities for your child to write, such as letters, shopping lists, posters or invitations.
- Have a wide selection of good quality writing materials readily available. Include a range of things to write **on** as well to write **with**.
- Talk to your child about his or her writing and read it through together – don't dwell on any mistakes, rather focus on the content of the writing.
- Praise your child positively and say something good about their writing. *Is it accurate? Descriptive? Thoughtful? Interesting? Does it say something?* Comments such as "I like the way you have..." is more effective than "You're clever!"
- Use games and puzzles, such as crosswords, word games, anagrams, etc.

How can I help with spelling?



Spelling is about spotting patterns and generalising making it practically impossible to learn to spell each word separately! Seeing patterns, making analogies and generalising are key skills, which is why sorting activities with words are particularly helpful. Spelling is a thinking process rather than a rote learning process. If you can explain *why* a word is spelt in a particular way, you will probably remember how to spell it.

- Play Scrabble, 'Hangman'; do word-puzzles, word-searches and crosswords together.
- Provide 'real' purposes for using knowledge of alphabetic order e.g. looking up a telephone number, finding a book in the library.
- Provide activities for word recognition - making up sets of paired words on card and playing 'pairs' using the words your child is currently learning.
- Write the words your child is learning on cards or post-its and sort the words in as many different ways as you can think of.
- Talk to your child about the words he/she is learning to spell at school and discuss some good ways of remembering the words, i.e. mnemonics (something such as a very short poem or a special word used to help a person remember something: *to spell 'because' use the mnemonic 'big elephants can always upset small elephants'*).
- Encourage breaking words into syllables e.g. *Wed – nes – day*.
- Praise successful attempts at spelling – praise the correctly spelt letters and discuss ways of remembering the 'tricky bit'.
- Show how to try out alternative spellings and checking to see which looks right.
- Identify the 'root' word in a longer word e.g. musician, musical.
- Demonstrate an interest in words - talking about the meanings and possible derivations of words.
- Provide an adult dictionary, thesaurus and/or spell-checker.

<http://www.autism.org.uk>

<http://www.dyscalculia.me.uk>

<https://readingagency.org.uk>

<https://readingagency.org.uk/children/>

<http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk>

<http://literacyapps.literacytrust.org.uk>

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/english-games/7-11-years/punctuation>

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/25-activities-reading-and-writing-fun>

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/Parents/learning-through-play-letters-and-words-activities>