



**Ask Questions** - Simple, clear directions and expectations are always important, but never more so than in a situation where teachers can't easily gauge when students are confused.

If your child is struggling to process the information given on video or PPT slides, particularly at the onset of lessons, encourage them to contact the class teacher straight away.

Teachers will be checking in with children throughout the day, but as a problem arises, if they message directly, then learning can be clarified sooner. This means that teachers can provide the in-the-moment prompts.

**Connecting the Learning** – Whilst teachers will inevitably need to bring in new material, staff will try to connect new information to what pupils have already learned—or, if they've forgotten the context that will help them understand and remember the new material, staff will let them know where they can find it.

When introducing a new concept or skill, teachers will provide pupils with examples. They might show children a maths problem that is already worked out or a video in which they demonstrate how to solve it, explaining what they're doing and why.

If your child still struggles, then you can provide further examples for them, or re-model a concept using the teacher examples given.

**Chunking the Learning** – Learning remotely means that children often need more time to process information and therefore most will be segmented into sections: an introduction (live teaching, video or PPT) followed by an independent task.

If your child needs to re-visit the introductory session for a second time, then they can do so. Breaking up the information and working on it in shorter sessions—and returning to the same points later on boosts learning because it helps pupils to focus on one aspect of the lesson at a time, rather than becoming overwhelmed by too many concepts, instructions etc.

**Consistency & Schedule** - Set a schedule so that both you and your child can balance home learning with your own work demands. Have a specific work place for your child to work – they can make it their own - cuddly toys, fancy gel pens, listening to music whilst they're writing!

Please don't feel that all activities have to be completed – just do what you can and be flexible with the structure of the day.

The DFE increased expectations for Key Stage 2 children that learning activities should last for four hours – why not focus on an hour's Maths, an hour's English and then an hour's topic work for the first few weeks to reduce expectations a bit?

If this is too much, then complete the Maths and English in the morning and let your child choose other 'skills' to work on during the afternoon – cooking; perfecting a dance routine; doing some artwork; Zumba class etc. That way the afternoon provides some positive down-time for your child to focus on more relaxing past-times to support their mental health.

It will also give parents a clear window to focus on your own work demands.

It is easy to worry that children are not learning enough or that they are losing motivation because remote learning is challenging so start with a selection of the tasks set and then build up time spent in front of a device as the weeks progress.

It's not 'dumbing things down' to have children do as much as they can under the circumstances. Achieving more modest goals is far more positive than being stressed and anxious over a mountain of work - all of which can make it difficult to learn, think, and engage meaningfully.

If your child is frustrated — or alternately, if they are very engaged in learning — make a change in your schedule to allow for a break (and revisit at a later day or time) or to spend time delving deeper into the topic. Some learning activities will be easier to move through than others.

Consider working with your child on those activities or subjects that are more difficult during the times of day when they are most alert and engaged. Learning material that is easier, and therefore moved through more quickly, can be completed at a different time (such as in the afternoon or even another day).

**Review expectations and check-in** - Begin and end the day by checking-in. In the morning, you could go over together what the class teacher is expecting around online learning. You might ask: What classes/subject do you have today? How will you spend your time? What resources do you need? What can I do to help?

Agree what your child should achieve by the end of the day. Set some expectations of your own as well. When will you and your child work together? When should they avoid interrupting you? What can they do in their downtime? Come up with a list of "must dos" and "may dos" together to cover the essentials and activities of choice.

At the end of the day you might ask: How far did you get in your learning tasks today? What did you discover? What was hard? What could we do to make tomorrow better?

These brief grounding conversations matter. They will help your child to process instructions they have received from their teacher, and it helps them to organise themselves and set priorities. These check-in routines can help avoid later challenges and disappointments.

**Growth Mindset and Character Education** – Encourage your child to use their 'Character Muscles' – resilience, positivity etc. (see the website for a list).

They might find things difficult initially, but they will overcome these anxieties.

Also, encourage a growth mindset, which means reminding children that it's not about being good or bad at something, but working toward getting better at it.

**Accessible Content** - In some cases, content being presented in a new way keeps children from accessing it. For instance, pupils who struggle to process auditory information may have trouble with video lessons. Children who need more visual support may struggle with text-heavy directions and materials.

Talk to your child about how they learn best and feel free to adapt a task e.g. if they need instructions written down, then draw up a simple list for them to follow, or use a modelled maths calculation or sentence/paragraph as an example. Are there certain types of distance learning activities that your child prefers over others? What lessons seem to engage your child more than others?

By all means, focus on these during the week when your workload is especially heavy, and then leave the 1:1 lessons where your input and instruction is needed more intensively for when you can jiggle work commitments a bit more. Don't forget that your child could work alongside a friend via Zoom or Facetime too (see staying connected letter).

**Help your child to 'own' their learning** - No one expects parents to be full-time teachers or to be educational and content matter experts.

Provide support and encouragement, and expect your child to do their part. Struggling is allowed and encouraged! Don't help too much. Becoming independent takes lots of practice.

**Structure & Support** - Many pupils rely on the structure and support of in-person schooling to help them stay on track with assignments.

Distance learning means pupils need to be more independent and responsible for their own learning.

**Use a checklist for focus** - For children who struggle with focusing, a basic visual checklist of tasks needed for a particular activity can be helpful.

For example, if your child is asked to watch a lesson, read a prompt, and then provide a written response to the prompt, the checklist would have keywords for each of these required activities: watch, read, write. Your child would check off each task with you as it is completed, and receive some positive praise or another reward when finished.

**Give your child (and yourself) a break** – We don't want children to be frustrated with or miserable about remote learning. In fact, teachers spend time trying to make lessons interesting, and to tailor instructions to provide the right level of challenge for their pupils.

If something is too challenging, or your child has hit a frustration level, it's okay to stop the activity and give them a break. It's also okay to slow down the pace, which means giving your child the time to think and process information.

It also means participating in segments of learning one at a time rather than trying to tackle a whole lesson in one sitting. You can pick that lesson back up another time or another day.

**Provide immediate positive feedback** - Each time your child completes distance learning activities, provide immediate and positive feedback!

Something as simple as having a reward chart and putting a check mark, star, or sticker for the work assignment can go a long way in helping to motivate children. Other reward ideas: choose a movie; a treat; tablet time; choose a family activity; free choice time; or an extra 15 minutes before bedtime etc. Let your child print out and display their 'work of the day' in your home (or take a photo of it and send it to a relative). It shows children you're proud of their work and helps them value their learning.

**Stay as positive as you can** – You 'make the weather'.

Children look to their parents to figure out how to react to new or intimidating situations.

Stay as positive as you can. Please remember that you will be doing your very best. We do appreciate that it is exceptionally challenging for parents who are working from home to also provide support for their children's remote learning, and you won't be alone in finding things demanding and frustrating during these early days.

**Manage stress and make the most of an unusual situation** - We are going through a time of major upheaval to our normal routines and ways of life, and there's a great deal of anxiety in the world right now.

Emotions may be running high, and children may be worried or fearful.

Parents may be stressed as well and children are often keenly aware of any unsettlement in a family.

Children benefit when they get age-appropriate factual information and ongoing reassurance from trusted adults. In these circumstances, it's often possible to reframe challenges as opportunities: for spending time together, discovering new ideas and interests, investing energy and attention in activities that often get pushed aside by everyday tasks and responsibilities. Go for a walk...do some exercise

**Get support with technology** - If you have any issues regarding technology, please contact school and speak to Mr Battle (our IT Network Leader), Mr Patching (Computing Leader) or Mrs Daft (School Business Manager).

All three staff will be able to talk you through any issues with Class Dojo or Google Classroom applications.