



How to help your child succeed in school

We often find parents are unsure of how best to help their support their child with school, particularly in exam years.

The exam system can be confusing, teenagers can feel stressed or argumentative and it can be hard to know the most helpful course of action.

You are not alone! We hope some of the tips here from educationalists and child psychologists might help.

Always contact your child's tutor or head of year if you want further support.

Tip 1: Get them to school, on time, every day!

It really does count. Encourage your child to be reflective, are they sure they can't press on through the day? Resilience (eg when feeling under the weather) is a skill we have to *learn* and missing school makes it much harder to stay on top of it all.

A healthy lifestyle is fundamental for feeling well and as such will help attendance. See the websites on the back of the leaflet for more advice on healthy eating, sleep habits, staying active and help for a healthy mind.



Tip 2: you don't need to know anything about the subject to be able to help!

- Encourage your child to become more self-motivated, talk to them about motivation and asking for help. Praise your child for their actions – don't underestimate the power of this praise, but keep it specific.
- Help them develop strategies for overcoming frustration
- Help them develop organisational skills including planning their time and organising their notes eg daily reminders to empty the school bag and check the homework planner.
- Help them find a good space for their homework, monitor ICT use to ensure they are staying safe, ensure they are equipped with the stationary and tools they need.
- Talk to your child about their feelings, stress and anxieties and help them develop coping strategies.
- Talk to your child about life after school, what their goals, aspirations and options might be and encourage them to see the relevance of working hard in all lessons for lifelong learning.
- Talk to your child about what they are learning in different subjects, asking them for specific knowledge retrieval helps them to strengthen their learning.
- Encourage your child to take responsibility for themselves: if they have lost a log-in, or don't understand the homework, what do they do or who could they ask.

Tips for dealing with homework excuses

- ♦ Keep track of the 'excuses', write them down with the date and subject
- ♦ Agree or suggest a solution eg bringing the work home to show you the next day
- ♦ Follow up without fail – set a reminder on your phone
- ♦ If excuses persist, explain your concern about the problem eg 'the school isn't giving you enough homework' and that you will need to contact the school.
- ♦ Remember the aim is to get the work done, not win the battle. Let your child save face, as long as they agree to do the work and stick to it.

Tip 3: Agree rules for homework

- ◇ This could be a time to start homework eg after a quick, healthy snack
- ◇ It could be a minimum amount achieved per day before TV/games etc
- ◇ Or a post-dinner double-check of the homework planner and bag pack
- ◇ It could be an agreed nightly 20 minute reading, or quizzing (more information on this in the revision tips)
- ◇ It could be agreeing a night off completely (where appropriate)
- ◇ Discuss background noise – eg TV off, music quiet. Research suggests that the best music for studying is music with no lyrics. If your household is fairly noisy, your child might be less distracted with headphones in.
- ◇ Agree regular check-ins about where your child is in relation to each subject, what they are learning, enjoying, finding difficult etc. Agreed check-ins might be more fruitful than feeling like you are nagging.
- ◇ Get in touch with the school if you have any concerns about homework, it should be set regularly and be a manageable workload.
- ◇ Allow for flexibility – life happens, but make sure they make up missed time. It's much harder to catch up if your child is behind.



Tip 4: Home learning

- * Students should be set regular homework (*KS3 – 30 mins once a week for core, once a fortnight for foundation subjects. KS4 – 45 mins once a week for all exam subjects*)
- * If your child is struggling with their homework, encourage them to use online resources eg bbc bitesize for help, refer to their exercise books or other lesson materials, refer to a revision aid or agree that they will speak to their teacher.
- * Beyond homework, it is helpful for your child to read regularly. They may borrow books from the school library if they wish. The more they improve their reading skills, the more likely they will achieve higher marks in exams.
- * It is also really helpful for them to listen to/watch the news periodically as a knowledge of current affairs will help widen their horizons and develop their general knowledge. A wide general knowledge is helpful when learning new information.
- * Encourage your child to re-visit their learning periodically. All students have been given guidance on the best way to revise (whether or not they have an exam coming up!) and the more regularly they do this, the better their long-term memory will be.
- * Note: it is normal for us to spend the most time focusing on the things we are best at. Encourage your child to dedicate some time to the areas that they need the most improvement.



The more that you
READ
The more things you
will **KNOW**
The more that you
LEARN
The more places you'll
GO
Dr Seuss

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Further information

<https://youngminds.org.uk/> —help for parents of teenagers, in particular with wider issues around mental health and wellbeing

<https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/> - lots of advice for students and parents on careers, exams choices and further education.

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/> - advice on a whole host of things, from spots to fussy eaters, bedtimes to revision.



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