

Daily Timetables that are visual

Clear visual timetables for the day, are extremely beneficial with helping prepare children for the day ahead and so that they know what is expected from them.

Once this has been established, many children find it useful to remove the picture once that session is completed. This allows them to see the day in sections and therefore make it much more manageable. They also can see what they have achieved so far and how long is remaining; visuals are one of the most effective method with supporting children



Reduce Distractions, top tips.

Some children view home as their safe and happy place, not where they should be working or learning. Learning at home can be challenging for some children, particularly those who see school as the place for learning and home is not.

- 1) Select seating wisely- You know your child best within the home environment. Generally advice is to try to avoid seating near doors, windows and external noise such as TV's, these can provide potential distractions.
- 2) Allow fidget toys / sensory toys – These often provide sensory input in a less distracting way. They can help improve concentration and attention to tasks by allowing the brain to filter out the extra sensory information e.g. listening to a lesson.
- 3) Be flexible and supportive – Each day is going to be different. Some of you will have your own work to be doing, let alone supporting your child. How much or how little you expect your child to do each day will very much depend on how your child is feeling and the work presented. Be kind to yourself and know that you are doing a great job! It is far better to develop independence with your child rather than battling with them and providing too much support with their work. It is always a good idea to encourage your child to share how they are feeling at the start of each day and throughout the sessions so that you can gauge how they are going to cope and if something needs to change

Break work down into smaller sections

The Now and Next visual is a useful tool for channelling a child's attention and ensure that they don't feel overwhelmed by what is expected from them. By breaking the task down into smaller pieces will help the child focus on one task at a time and develop a sense of independence, without becoming distressed and overwhelmed. If you are using the Now and Next visual, the Now tends to be the task you want the child to do and the Next is usually a motivating reward. An example could be:

Now: Start and answer all your maths fluency task.

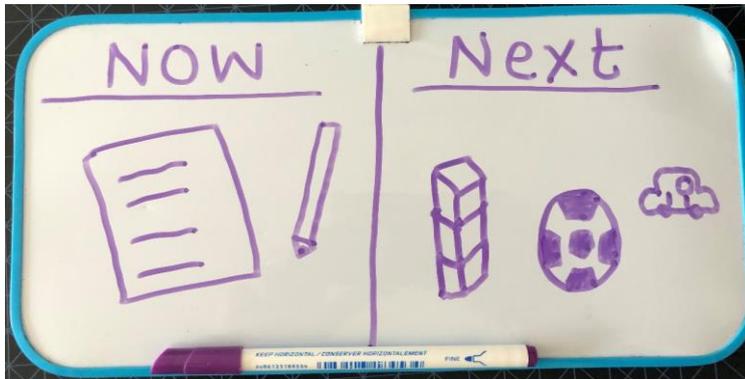
Next: Five minutes of reading your favourite book

It could also be:

Now: Write three sentences for your English task on your own.

Next: You have 5 minutes to choose what you would like to do.

The key to success with these boards is to ensure that children have a clear understanding of the time and that there is an end in sight. Use of sand timers, stopwatch or even Alexa (if you have one) can be invaluable.



Learning Breaks

Learning Breaks for children is when they are given a short mental break from the focused task, these usually occur at regular intervals in the day, but can take place as and when is needed. There is no set time or general rule for a learning break, however they usually last between five and ten minutes. The learning breaks can be cool down time or physical activity. The benefits of using learning breaks throughout the day can include:

- Enabling a child to be calmer.
- Allowing the child time and space to think about what they were just doing, so that when they return they can be more focused and engaged.
- It decreases the chance of the child daydreaming and not working when they should be.
- Supports the child's mental health and if it is a physical activity then it promotes a healthy lifestyle.-
- Learning breaks have also shown to significantly reduce stress and anxiety levels too, providing organic improvements to learning and higher engagement levels.

This is not an exhaustive list, but just some of the benefits of allowing for learning breaks. Learning breaks themselves can be very easy to establish, you do not always need a garden. For example:

- Stretching breaks that include yoga poses (dog, cat, cow, bug, rock) and animal walks (walk like a bear, hop like a frog, stand like a flamingo, fly like a bird) .
- Wall push-ups or "normal" push-ups.
- Yoga ball activities (if you have one).
- Sit-ups
- Jumping jacks .
- Cross crawls (touch hand to opposite knee).
- Rocket ship jumps (bending down, touching toes and bouncing while counting down from 10, then blast off).
- Snow angels on the floor.

