

Parents Guide



TEN TIPS TO
SUPPORT
CHILDREN
LEARNING
ENGLISH AS
AN
ADDITIONAL
LANGUAGE
AT HOME



TAPESTRY
ONLINE LEARNING
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GET TO KNOW THE SCHOOL, THE TEACHERS, AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

- Read the school policies and learn about the British School system – this will help you understand how you can support your children with their learning.
- Be actively involved in your children’s education. Attend school events, meetings, assemblies and workshops to learn about the curriculum subjects and teaching methods.
- Have a voice – join the Parent Teacher Association /school governors. Volunteer to help in the library, with reading, school trips, and events and share your culture, language, and experiences.
- Check school bags daily to find out what your child is learning at school and what home learning has been set.



2

CREATE THE BEST ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING AT HOME



- Helping with home learning shouldn't mean spending hours hunched over a desk and you don't need a lot of expensive equipment.
- Create good home learning routines. Set a regular time to do school work, and if you can, create a homework-friendly, quiet, and well-lit area, perhaps with a desk for older children or a beanbag for younger children.
- Provide supportive aids such as a bilingual visual dictionary and a thesaurus (your local library can be a good source for these) to create a bridge between home language and English. Pens, pencils and a computer – you can ask your child's school about accessing some of these resources as needed.
- Make time to take an interest in your child's home learning, sit with them to guide them and talk to them about their class topics and home learning tasks.



CONSTANCY AND CONSISTENCY IS THE KEY FOR LEARNING

- Develop good routines with a regular and age-appropriate bedtime. Children need plenty of sleep to be able to concentrate and learn well. Avoid late nights, especially during festivals.
- Support your child to have regular mealtimes and healthy meals whenever possible.
- Set age appropriate home learning times.
- Remember that a school day can be very tiring and so don't overload your child with too many after school activities. Allow them time to play and have some 'down' time.





VALUE AND USE HOME LANGUAGE AND CULTURE



- Talk to your children about their cultural heritage to give them a sense of identity. Create family treasure baskets with special cultural items or journals for trips back home for children to share with their class.
- Keep your home language alive! Celebrate the language – ensure your child is proud to be a speaker of two or more languages. Children with a strong foundation in their home language are more successful in all areas of schooling compared to monolingual peers.
- Use your home language to support your child. Read dual language books together, introduce songs and rhymes in your home language. Songs and rhymes are fun and allow lots of repetition and secure language patterns.
- Make bilingual books of new words from the topics of learning and discuss these in both languages. Create activities such as crosswords, word-searches and quizzes to support learning.



TALK! TALK! TALK!

- The amount and quality of talk that children experience at home is one of the best indicators of their learning success. Talking is good for the brain. The way children talk makes a difference to their learning.
- Children understand what they are learning through talking, asking questions, and discussing their ideas. Encourage your children to ask and answer questions to develop their critical thinking.
- Thinking and speaking are interlinked. Talking is a rehearsal for reading and writing. Encourage your children to talk about what they are reading and organise their thoughts before writing.
- Use your home language to discuss new language that is being learnt in English. This will help your children make connections between the languages and understand better.





READ WITH YOUR CHILD

- Reading is much more than just being able to mechanically read the text. It is important that children understand what they are reading and can answer questions about the text.
- Create a special time to snuggle in and read with your child/children – it could be part of their bedtime routine. Visit the library and choose books together.
- Talk about the pictures – ask children to describe the pictures and predict what might happen on the next page. Discuss the vocabulary and its meaning. Pictures books with no words promote natural talk about the story.
- Share oral stories from your own culture and language. Stories are important for creating imagination and developing the language of storytelling.





TURN EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES INTO LEARNING

- Give your children wider learning experiences – this could be a trip on the bus, to a local park to explore the nature there, or to a museum or the seaside. These kinds of experiences help to grow their imagination.
- Turn everyday activities at home, such as cooking (measuring, instructions) and food shopping (money, ingredients) into natural opportunities for learning.
- Build vocabulary and language – talk to your children whilst you do these everyday activities. Developing their general vocabulary helps them to understand classroom routines and tasks, and gives confidence in speaking in class.
- Set age-appropriate chores – so children can learn how to be independent and take responsibility – e.g., setting the table.





CREATIVE PLAY



- Not all learning has to be formal. Learning should be fun and age appropriate.
- Creative play gets children involved, is enjoyable and develops valuable language and communication skills. Through play, children can explore, express themselves, grow their imagination and persevere through any difficulties, whilst developing their physical, social, cognitive and emotional self.
- Creative play can be role play, water play, making models from boxes, dressing up, playing with Lego and more. Join your children in the play so you can share the fun and learning.
- Play games with your children – board games or card games if you have some. Or make up bingo and verbal games such as ‘I spy’. All these games teach children to take turns, make decisions, and practice language used in the games.



DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY – BENEFITS AND DANGERS

- Beware of the digital dangers. Supervise your children, Set parental controls and manage privacy settings. Talk to your children about internet safety.
- Set an age-appropriate time for using digital devices.
- Use the internet to research the class topics, literacy, numeracy and other educational websites in your home language, using age-appropriate websites.
- Research shows that the overuse of digital devices and screen time spent alone can hinder children's language development. So, limit the time spent on devices to allow children to have interactions with others.



10

FAMILY WHO LEARNS TOGETHER, GROWS TOGETHER

- Be a role model – join in the learning and make it fun!
- Praise your children. Let them know they are doing well, and you are proud of them.
- Improve your English and the curriculum subject knowledge so you can support your children with their learning.
- Not all learning is indoors – the outdoors offers a lot of learning opportunities. Get your children outside – a walk can generate conversation, you can talk about the weather, seasons and the surroundings, as well as improving your children’s physical and mental health.

