

# Top Tips for Home Learning

## Start the day on the right foot

It's tempting to turn off the alarm and let everyone stay in their pyjamas until midday, but getting up and being ready to start work/home learning at usual times will help everyone get into the right mindset.

## Break the day into manageable chunks

Following the school timetable is the best routine and one that children are used to. It incorporates breaks and time to be away from the screens - encourage outside time. Lessons will follow this pattern.

## Work out the workspace: stay organised and avoid distractions

Not all of us are lucky enough to have a dedicated desk at home, so it's quite possible that you and your child will be sharing the same workspace. This can be tricky, especially if you both have lots of paper and resources to spread out. Try to work out a plan for sharing space. You and your child could each have your own space perhaps at opposite ends of the table. With more than one child try to keep them and their lessons in separate rooms.

Avoid distractions by reducing their access to distractions! Remove phones when working on lessons, they are not allowed in class at school. Switch off/remove the games consoles, avoid snacks until breaktime.

## Positive reinforcement

Teachers will be giving as much praise as they are able but it will not feel the same as the non-verbal and verbal reassurances children get in class. If they complete their lessons and tasks for each session maybe build in rewards that recognise their efforts. Showing that you are proud of them, admire their effort ... when they have done it, will give them reassurance and encouragement to repeat.

## Set *your* priorities

You may not be as productive working at home with your child around as you would be in your usual place of work, so every morning, take stock of what you need to do that day and draw up a list of priorities. You might, for example, have a conference call that you absolutely have to be there for, but decide that admin tasks could wait till the end of the day – and roll over to the next if need be.

Having a to-do list of tasks that you can strike off as they're completed is highly satisfying, and will show you that even if this is difficult, you ARE getting things done. It also models to your children that this is a satisfying way to achieve what you need to. Everyone staying calm is the best way to survive!

## Schedule *breaks for you too*

Make sure you take some time out of your working day when you get a chance. This isn't just for your sanity (and to eat): it'll also give you a chunk of time to spend with your child (or alone if you prefer!).

## Plan stress free meals

Endlessly having to provide food can really interrupt workflow. Keeping to the school day will help here as break time and lunchtime are the time when this is possible. Maybe make packed lunches the evening before so you don't have to spend time making sandwiches when you could be working. Better still, secondary age children working from home could also be encouraged to make their own and cook at least one family meal a week to be part of your effective home working team!

## Cut yourself some slack

School will let you know if there is a problem with the work your child is submitting. They are setting and feeding back on the curriculum your child needs. You do not need to be a home tutor; the teachers are available online for students to contact if they get stuck. Just ensure that they get enough sleep. Ensure that they're eating properly. Ensure that they're getting on with their family.

**Most importantly: if you feel it's all going pear-shaped, ask for help.**

**Sources:** [www.theschoolrun.com](http://www.theschoolrun.com); BBC Radio 4 Woman's Hour; OakMeadow; KhanAcademy; TeacherTapp and Guardian writers.