

The Winsford Academy



Coping with Dyslexic Difficulties at Secondary School



A local school for local children.

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HOMEWORK TIPS FOR PARENTS

Homework can be a frustrating and upsetting experience for dyslexic pupils and their parents on a daily basis. Here are some tips to help make homework a less traumatic experience.

First of all, remember: the purpose of homework is for your child to practise something that is already familiar. If homework is too difficult, you should discuss this with the teacher who issued it. Don't allow your child to become frustrated because homework tasks are beyond their skills or take too long. Setting smaller amounts of work and/or allowing extra time will often help.

Establishing a Routine. Develop a daily homework routine. A written or visual plan put in a prominent place is ideal. It should include a particular place set aside for homework and an agreed plan as to what happens after arrival home from school. It should also be flexible enough to take into account after-school activities. The homework place needs to be as quiet as possible, with a cleared space for work and items required at hand e.g. pens, pencils, rubber, books, etc. The kitchen table is suitable if close supervision is required at busy times. Work out the best time for your child to do homework. Keep in mind that your child may be very tired after school - they have had to work harder than other pupils because of their dyslexia. They may need a break before starting homework.

Getting Started

- Break homework tasks into manageable parts
- Give breaks between different tasks
- Encourage your child to produce quality work rather than rushing to finish everything in one sitting
- Please do not arrange for extra homework to help your child catch up - a dyslexic learner can become discouraged when faced with large amounts of work.

Go over the homework requirements to ensure your child understands what to do. Read instructions aloud to make sure that the task is fully understood. If necessary, practise the first example or two with them. Help your child to talk about ideas for writing tasks and projects before they start writing. If necessary, revise vocabulary that they may need.

Sometimes doing a mind map or spider diagram helps to get simple, one word ideas down on paper which can be numbered and used as a plan for writing. If your child has a lot of writing to do, perhaps scribe for your child to get their ideas on paper.

3. **Checking and Monitoring Work.** Help your child to learn editing, self-monitoring and checking skills so they can develop more independence in their work as they get older. For example, a simple process like CAPS can be helpful when proofreading work:

C = Capitals **A = Appearance** **P = Punctuation** **S = Spelling**

If you have a laptop/PC at home, encourage your child to use it for longer pieces of written work so that they can use the spellchecker and easily edit their work.

If your dyslexic child is slow to complete work, encourage the use of a timer and see how much work can be completed in five minutes. But remember that if homework is regularly taking too long or is too difficult, you should discuss this with school staff.

Give your child lots of praise as they complete homework tasks. Be specific about what they have done well.

Organisation. Help the child to develop a homework plan using the Pupil Planner. Work out which days and times they should do their homework. Monitor time spent on homework and results.

1. Encourage your child to keep their school notes and work together in folders so they don't get mixed up lost or damaged. Organise notes into subjects, and ensure that they are filed regularly. Colour coding of subjects can greatly assist organisation and planning.
2. If pupils are not writing their homework down accurately, arrange for them to check with someone in the same class at the end of the day. Or ask teachers to give them written homework instructions for more complex tasks.
3. Liaise with teachers regularly to check that pupils are completing homework tasks and class work correctly and are handing in work at school. Check that your child is taking the correct books and equipment to school each day. Develop a visual or written plan if this is an area of difficulty.

Study Skills. Make sure that your child has effective plans for approaching tasks like essay writing, coursework, study for examinations. Talk to the school's SEN staff about these. Build up independent work skills and problem solving strategies for use when the child is “stuck” or not sure of how to go about homework. For example, get your child to think about several different ways they could complete the task correctly. They can also think about who to ask for help if the strategies tried are unsuccessful.

Encourage your child to make notes, underline key words, highlight, draw pictures, etc. when studying to aid memory.

Using Technology. Use of a computer to present homework often makes a positive difference to results in secondary school. Access to subject textbooks, novels, etc. on line or on CD can make life much easier. The ‘read to me’ function on many tablets can help pupils listen to English set texts. Please click the link for more information.

<https://bdatech.org/what-technology/apps/#tts>