

From mountain to sea

Aberdeenshire Parent Factsheet

Learning at Home

Your home is a great place to support learning. It is where your child comes back to rest and play. Your child can try out new activities and practice familiar learning at home and in their wider community.

Learning at home can happen through a range of everyday activities which can be fun and informative. You can support your child's learning throughout their life. The support they will need will be different at different ages.

Once your child is at school there may be an expectation that he/she does homework. This may vary from stage to stage of your child's learning. If you have queries about your child's homework contact his/her teacher in the first instance.

Early Years and your home

Your baby or toddler needs time with you or other special adults. They will respond to eye contact, talking, and singing songs and nursery rhymes. They need to explore the world and have access to lots of different everyday objects and natural materials which need not cost a lot. Your baby or toddler will love to play with wooden or stainless steel spoons and whisks from the kitchen drawer, or a clean pine cone or wooden clothes pegs while you watch them. Even at this age they will enjoy looking at simple picture and board books.

As your child gets older they will become more independent and ask lots of questions. They will learn a lot by helping you with simple tasks around the home like matching socks and sorting washing into lights and darks. You can encourage them to develop their skills by asking them to set the table or help you prepare food.

Age appropriate toys and books are important. These do not need to be the latest, or most expensive. Libraries allow you to access to a wide range of books and to show your child that you enjoy and value reading too. You can find out from your library about Bookbug sessions. Some areas also have toy libraries.

School Years and home

Children and young people will need time and a place to do their homework or study at home. Ideally this will be somewhere that doesn't need to be cleared away once they have finished each day. You can help by finding a place at home where they can work in relative quiet and keep them from being interrupted. You can read more about supporting your child as they study for exams in the supporting study section of the Education Scotland Parentzone website.

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-at-home/Supporting%20study>



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Parents often worry that they don't have the knowledge to support their children with their homework. If you are not sure how you can help please ask your child's school. However, the research shows that you make a big difference to your child's attainment just by showing an interest in their work and encouraging them. You don't need to know the answers!

What can you do to support your child?

Supporting your child at the pre-school stage

At this stage in learning encourage your child to explore, experiment and use their imagination to learn. Some examples may include

- count with your child using real life examples such as counting the number of fingers on their hand, how many red cars until we get to the shops
- identify letter sounds in everyday objects -there's a Blue Ball
- share nursery rhymes, stories or songs with your child
- help your child see that learning is something that doesn't just happen at school – life is full of things to learn about
- encourage imaginative play eg use cardboard boxes and blocks
- read with your child
- create your own stories using everyday objects
- make your own toys using recycled materials
- encourage your child to try new foods
- create a bedtime routine
- help your child deal with emotions such as frustration and anger
- teach routines of saying hello, goodbye, taking turns and the use of please and thank you

Supporting your child at primary school

By the time your child is at primary school they will be learning to be independent and learning the vital building blocks of literacy and numeracy. Your support can encourage a developing and lasting interest in learning new things.

- Use maths in everyday contexts eg cooking (numbers, weights, time)
- share rhymes, stories or songs with your child
- encourage imaginative and interactive play
- read with your child and encourage independent reading
- create your own stories
- make something together, such as a cake or a sandwich
- visit libraries, museums, galleries
- encourage and help your child to cook a meal and/or set the table



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Supporting your child at primary school (continued)

- use word searches, puzzles and board games to reinforce literacy and numeracy
- research a topic of interest on the internet, in a library or from other sources
- Encourage your child to try a variety of activities from sport to the arts. Hobbies are also important ways to learn and help young people to de-stress
- Encourage your child to get involved in your community eg volunteering
- Encourage healthy eating habits
- Be a learning role model – if your child sees you still trying new things he/she will start to realise that learning is not just when we are at school but throughout our lives
- be an emotional coach (help them deal with frustration and anger),
- teach greeting, turn taking and conversation
- put away all phones at dinner to encourage conversation
- Be emotionally available to connect with your child – switch off your phone
- Encourage your child to be independent and responsible with clothing choices, hobbies and friendships
- Talk to your child about their dreams and aspirations

Supporting your child at secondary school

Your child will need to work more independently at secondary school than at primary school. But your interest and input will still be important and will help them learn. The support they need may be less about learning and more about the organisation of their time and helping them manage their teenage brain!

- Show an interest in what your child is doing
- Ask their opinions about things happening in the world – most young people have an opinion
- Try to discuss things with them not talk at them
- Support your child in planning out what work he/she has to do. If your child has several assignments due in on the same day, suggest they space the work out rather than leave it all until the night before it is due to be handed in.
- Give them some responsibility to do things for themselves but be there to support them when they get it wrong
- Be a parent, not a friend – set limits
- Have a tech free dinner to encourage conversation
- Be emotionally available to connect with your young person – avoid your digital distractions
- Encourage your child to be independent with responsible with money, time, risk, friendship and relationship choices
- Talk to your child about their dreams and aspirations
- Talk to your child about career choices

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Supporting your child at secondary school (continued)

- Encourage healthy eating habits
- Encourage your child to be take part in a variety of physical activity
- Encourage your child to get involved in your community eg volunteering
- Provide opportunities for boredom – this is down time for the brain and promotes creativity

Where to get more information

- Guides for parents on how to support children in literacy, numeracy, science, health and wellbeing, play, and supporting study can be found using the following link
<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-at-home>
- In a nutshell guides for parents on Curriculum for Excellence national qualifications can be found on the National Parent Forum Scotland website
<https://www.nfps.org.uk/>
- Read, Write, Count - a national initiative which aims to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of Scotland's children.
<http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/reading/parents/read-write-count-bags>
- PlayTalkRead - encourages parents and families to include easy and fun reading, writing and counting activities in their everyday lives.
<https://www.parentclub.scot/articles/play-talk-read>
- Bookbug bags – aims to encourage parents and children to share and enjoy books together.
<http://scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/bookbug-bags>

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