



How can I help at home?

Top strategies for supporting dyslexic learners.

Homework can be a frustrating and upsetting experience for dyslexic children and their parents.

For a child with dyslexia it's not just the homework task itself that can be challenging, many dyslexic children can also really struggle with organisation, concentration and short-term memory. All of these things can make homework a daily source of confusion and frustration. This can result in a reluctance to try and poor self-confidence.

There are strategies that every parent can put in place to support their child's learning.

Establish a routine

Dyslexic learners may find it difficult to maintain concentration for long periods of time and may get tired quickly, so it's a good idea to create a routine which emphasises 'a little and often' rather than trying to squeeze too much work into a longer session.

Remember to take after-school activities into account when you develop your homework plan.

Encourage your child to write down what is needed for the next day and to check the list before they leave for school/college.

Support your child

Be encouraging. Praise your child when they are trying their best, and focus your praise 'It was really good when you..!'

Go over homework instructions together to make sure they understand what they are supposed to do. You can help your child to prepare for tasks and generate ideas together before they start work.

If your child has difficulty writing homework down at school or remembering tasks, talk to their teacher so that the homework is given to them on a worksheet or can be accessed another way.



Checking work

Help your child learn to check their own work, so this becomes a natural part of the homework routine as they get older. Your child may find working on a computer easier than writing. Show them how to use the spellcheck facility and help them learn to touch type.

Reading work out loud or using text-to-speech software to read work back – this can help to identify errors that your child might miss when they read silently

Making a list of frequent spelling, punctuation, and grammar mistakes to check against. For example, if your child often misses capital letters, make sure that's on the list.

Organisation

Dyslexic people can really struggle with organisation. For an older child technology such as a mobile phone will be a helpful tool. They can take photos of any important information, set reminders of important events or deadlines and record voice messages as a reminder.

Other useful strategies are to:

Help your child to make a written homework plan which includes tasks and deadlines, and revision plans.

Colour-code subjects and make sure all notes for a particular subject are kept together in folders.

Create visual reminders such as a prominent calendar or 'to do' list.

Try to help your child build successful study skills for example, by creating a revision timetable, by using different techniques for revising and reviewing learning, e.g. using mind-maps, by talking through or recording what they've learned, or by thinking of different ways to complete a particular task.

Writing facts to be learnt in different colours (as in this document) to help separate items can also help children to identify, process and sort the information they have read!