

ADVICE FOR PARENTS

At Annbank Primary School



Introduction & How to Help

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Introduction

In Annbank Primary we believe that all children should have the enjoyment and satisfaction that comes from reading and writing. This booklet gives practical suggestions on how you, as parents/carers, can assist in your child's learning. We hope you find it useful.

How to help



You have a tremendous influence on your child's attitude towards reading and writing. Remind them that everybody is good at something and even though they may find reading and writing difficult, they have other strengths.

- Your child's success will be greatly increased if he or she feels confident.
- Believe in them and show how proud you are of them.
- Praise them when they make an effort.

Praise lets children know when they are doing the right things in learning to read, write or spell. Praise motivates them to keep on trying. When you praise children it is important to tell them why you are pleased with them, and then they can see for themselves what they are doing is right.

Reading



Children do not enjoy the experience of learning to read if they are not making progress.

- Set aside a special time and place for reading. Don't let the phone or TV distract your child.
- When you listen to your child read give plenty of praise.
- Don't rush - let your child turn the pages.
- Help keep your child interested and enthusiastic about reading by giving him or her a wide range of reading materials, including comics, magazines etc.
- Make sure the book is not too difficult.
- Everybody enjoys being read to. If your child is interested in, but can't read a particular book - read it to him or her.
- Discuss the pictures together and what might happen in the story.
- Share the story with your child, reading as little or as much as s/he feels comfortable with.
- Let him/her re-read favourite stories.
- Only correct if the meaning is lost or changed.
- If your child is stuck at a word, leave it out and read onto the end of the sentence. Then have a go at the unknown word using the first letter/picture/rest of sentence to help. If this doesn't work then give the word.
- Recorded stories encourage a love of books

Spelling



You can practise and play together to improve your child's spelling.

Here are some things you can try.

- Decorate or illustrate the words.
- Make and Break - Write the word on paper. Cut each letter out. Jumble them up to see if you can rebuild the word.
- Use sand, flour, squeeze bottles to write out words.
- Type the word.
- Look at the word and concentrate on the tricky part. Close your eyes and imagine the word before trying to rewrite it.
- Colour and trace over the word in different colours.
- Say the word slowly as you write it.
- Take one of the words and try to make as many other words with the same sound e.g. sound, found, round, ground.

For older children

- Look through newspapers and magazines to highlight spelling list words.
- Encourage use of a spell master if s/he has one.
- Encourage use of a key word list.

Use the Look, Cover, Write, Check strategy demonstrated on the next page.



LOOK - Carefully read word. Use Make and Break technique. Break down into syllables (put hand under chin - each time your chin moves make a syllable).

SAY - Say it aloud - choose a **strategy***

COVER- Cover the word and try to imagine it.

WRITE- Remember the 'cue'

CHECK - If it is misspelt, say what is wrong. What do you have to remember? Try again.

***Strategies**

1. Analogy - same letter pattern of a known word. Eg. Would, could
2. Mnemonic - eg. They - Tom Hates Egg Yolks. Said - Sally Ann Is Dancing
3. Small words in big words - e.g. 'here' in there
4. Pronounce the word as you spell it - e.g. pe-o-ple
5. Think of the shape of the word e.g. bridge
6. use the word in a sentence - perhaps draw a funny picture to go with it.
7. Calligram - make the word into a picture e.g. fat with fat letters.
8. Own cue - the child will remember better if s/he thinks of their own way to remember the word.

Handwriting



Make sure your child

- Has chair and table at correct height. Use cushion if required.
- Has enough light.
- Use non-writing hand steadies the page.
- Uses a sharp pencil. If writing is too faint with a normal 'HB' pencil, use a 'B' pencil. If writing is too dark change to 'F' or 'H'. Some children find it easier to write on a sloping surface - a ring binder is a good DIY way of doing this.
- If writing is too big use a highlighter to highlight the bottom half of the line so they can see where the letters should go, with only the ascenders and descenders going above and below the highlighted area. This can be a huge help.

Organising and Study



It is important to understand the difficulties dyslexic children have in the classroom. In addition to reading, writing and spelling, they may find it difficult to remember instructions or organise themselves or their ideas onto a piece of written work. Every child learns differently and not everything will help every child.

Brainstorming and Mind Mapping

Write as many ideas as you can down on post-its. These can then be organised onto a Mind Map. The advantage of post-its is that they can be moved about.

Planning

Use a weekly planner to help your child remember items for school, such as PE Kit. Keep a special place where all completed work and special things for school should go.

Homework

The main reasons for homework are -

- Practising a new skill.
- Finishing a piece of work started in class.
- Learning for a test.
- Coursework
- Finding out about a new topic.

Help your child use contents pages, glossaries and index when using reference books.

Warm up-

Check details in homework diary.

Sort out books.

Arrange pencils etc.

Read through instructions carefully and underline key words eg. Describe, compare (see key task glossary below)

Think about the purpose of the homework.

If s/he gets stuck.

Encourage not to panic.

Re-read the instructions.

Ask them to explain the task.

Get them to proof read the work.

If they are revising - test them verbally.

The three biggest problems with homework are:

1. Getting started.
2. Knowing what to do
3. Keeping up to date

Remember Einstein had very poor spelling, was disorganised and got lost when out walking, but he didn't do too badly!

Key Task Glossary

Calculate	Find an answer in numbers.
Compare	Identify the differences and similarities.
Contrast	Compare pieces of information, but focus on the differences.
Describe	Give a description or meaning for something.
Diagram	Construct a graph, chart or drawing as a visual portrayal of a piece of information.
Discuss	Display the points for and against a certain point and give a conclusion at the end.
Explain	Show that you understand a particular point, text or piece of information.
Illustrate	Use examples to explain a piece of information.
Justify	Provide a statement about why something happened or why you have a certain viewpoint.
List	Provide a number of items in a sequence.
Outline	Present a general summary of an event or a text which will provide the key points.
Predict	Show the effect of something or the likely outcome or an event.
Prove	Show through logical progression that something is true.
Summarize	Provide a short account of a text or piece of information that shows the main outline.

Computers and Literacy Skills



Word processing is very helpful for dyslexic pupils:

- It is easier and quicker to press a key than form a letter.
- Typing looks good throughout and the pupil ends up with a piece of work they can be proud of.
- Print on screen is easier for them to identify mistakes.
- It is easier to edit mistakes.
- Random thoughts and words can be moved and put in order.
- This is also very good for children with severe handwriting difficulties.

You can help your child by encouraging them to find their way round a key board. The spell checking facility can help, but remember these are not designed for dyslexic children.

Useful Websites

<http://www.dyslexiatransition.org>

<http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk>

<http://www.countmein.org.uk>

www.actiondyslexia.co.uk

www.frameworkforinclusion.org/dyslexiaassessment

Most importantly if you have any concerns or need any help or support please contact the school.