

Last week Ofsted published a survey of parents which highlighted the top 3 concerns about home learning. They were:

1. My child's focus on studying
2. Lack of contact with classmates
3. Motivation to engage.

So, we decided to offer our top tips for tackling these 3 problems.

1. Helping your child to focus: making it manageable

Be realistic about how long children can sit down and work at home. This increases with age but is still a challenge.



- Think in 15- 20 minute chunks of time with breaks in between
- Create a timetable to show them each day when they need to focus and when they can play. For younger children pictures will help and they can plan what they want to do when it isn't learning time. For older children encourage them to complete this independently
- Reward the process of learning not the product. Lots of praise for focusing and working matters not just for what the work looks like.
- Be specific with praise; 'I am giving you a point because you wrote all the way to the end of the line without stopping!'
- Set yourself up with a free account for Class Dojo (<https://www.classdojo.com/>) so you can give them points and personalise the areas of praise.



2. Lack of contact with classmates



We are all social creatures and talking to our peers is an important part of learning. Technology can help them maintain this

- Arrange a Facetime or other media check in with a friend to share their work
- Send photos to keep in touch
- Think about postcards and letters, getting something in the post from a friend is always exciting
- Older children may be able to work 'live' with each other to complete some tasks; sites like google doc allow children to collaborate on the same piece of work and share ideas in planning

3. Motivation

This is a tough one for us in school too!



- External motivation can help; we use systems like dojo points and rewards in school to help motivate pupils. What systems could you and your child devise together to help with this at home?
- Internal motivation comes from feeling positive about what we do. If we praise children for their effort not just the finished product, for trying when they find something hard this can increase motivation even when work is hard.
- Can you notice, when they get started by themselves? When they use their own strategies to get unstuck at a tricky problem? Rewarding both of these can help children feel more positive about their work
- Audience; sharing their work when they have really tried can be another way to help. Sending it to grandparents, putting it on the fridge, reading it aloud can all make children feel positive about themselves.