

Supporting Your Child with Homework

A Practical Guide for Primary School Parents





Introduction

Homework can be a valuable opportunity to reinforce learning and build confidence. However, for some children it quickly becomes a source of frustration for both the child and their family.

If your child regularly avoids homework, becomes upset, loses concentration, or seems to spend far longer than expected on simple tasks, there may be underlying reasons rather than a lack of effort.

This guide shares practical strategies to make homework calmer, more productive, and less stressful.

Create the Right Environment



Children concentrate best when distractions are kept to a minimum.

Try to:

- **Choose a quiet place away from television and loud conversations.**
- **Keep pencils, paper and equipment nearby.**
- **Make sure lighting is comfortable.**
- **Reduce unnecessary distractions from phones or tablets.**
- **Offer a drink of water before starting.**

Small changes to the environment can make a noticeable difference.

Establish a Routine

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Children often work better when homework becomes part of a predictable daily routine.



Same time each day

Complete homework at roughly the same time each day.



Short break first

Allow a short break after school before beginning.



Start with easier tasks

Begin with easier tasks to build confidence.



Finish with something enjoyable

Finish with something enjoyable as a reward.



*Knowing what to expect
reduces anxiety and arguments.*



Our Homework Routine



3:30 Home & snack



4:00 Short break



4:15 Homework time



5:00 Finished!



5:15 Enjoy time



Routine
Confidence
Calm
Success



Break Large Tasks into Smaller Steps

*Break Large Tasks
into Smaller Steps* ♥



Read Instructions Together



Children learn by watching us. When we model good habits, they pick them up naturally.

Show your child how it's done by modelling these simple habits:

Read Aloud

Read the instructions aloud yourself first, so your child sees how it's done.

Point & Underline

Underline or point to important keywords together.

Think Out Loud

Say "Let me check what it's asking" — model thinking through the task.

One Step at a Time

Tackle one instruction at a time, showing there's no rush.

Understanding the task is often the hardest part.

Support Rather Than Rescue



Help with Reading

If reading is difficult:



Read Aloud Together

Read instructions aloud together.



Take Turns

Take turns reading.



Use a Guide

Use a ruler or reading guide.



Audiobooks

Encourage audiobooks where appropriate.



The aim is understanding, not simply getting through the page.

Help with Writing



Writing places many demands on a child at the same time. They need to think of ideas, remember spelling, organise sentences, use punctuation, and form letters.

To reduce the load:

→ Talk First

Allow them to talk through ideas first.

→ Use Bullet Points or Mind Maps

Use bullet points or mind maps to organise thoughts.

→ Accept Neatness May Vary

Focus on communicating ideas before correcting spelling.

→ Encourage Short Breaks

Confidence grows when children feel successful.

Celebrate Effort



Praise has the greatest impact when it recognises effort rather than perfection.

Small successes gradually build resilience.

- ✓ You kept going even when it became difficult.
- ✓ I like how you checked your work.
- ✓ You remembered to use capital letters.
- ✓ You solved that problem independently.

Know When to Stop

Know When to Stop

Homework should reinforce learning, not cause prolonged distress.



Finding the right balance



If your child becomes increasingly frustrated or tired:



Take a five-minute break.



Return later if appropriate.



Let the teacher know if homework regularly takes much longer than expected.

Consistent struggles provide useful information for school.



Signs Your Child May Need Additional Support

Every child develops differently, but persistent difficulties may indicate that additional support or further investigation would be helpful.

Avoids Homework

Avoiding homework whenever possible.

Upset Before Starting

Becoming upset before starting.

Slow Reading

Reading much more slowly than classmates.

Forgets Instructions

Frequently forgetting instructions.

Inconsistent Spelling

Inconsistent spelling of familiar words.

Copying Difficulties

Difficulty copying from books or the board.

Takes Much Longer

Homework taking significantly longer than expected.

Mental Exhaustion

Becoming mentally exhausted after short periods of work.

Low Confidence

Low confidence despite trying hard.

 These difficulties do not automatically indicate dyslexia or another specific learning difference, but they may suggest that further advice would be beneficial.

Homework Checklist for Parents

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Use this checklist to reflect on how homework is going at home. Tick the statements that feel true most of the time.

☐  **Homework takes an appropriate amount of time.**
It doesn't regularly take much longer than expected.

☐  **My child starts homework without major distress.**
They generally begin without becoming upset or overwhelmed.

☐  **They understand most of the instructions.**
We rarely spend a long time trying to make sense of what's being asked.

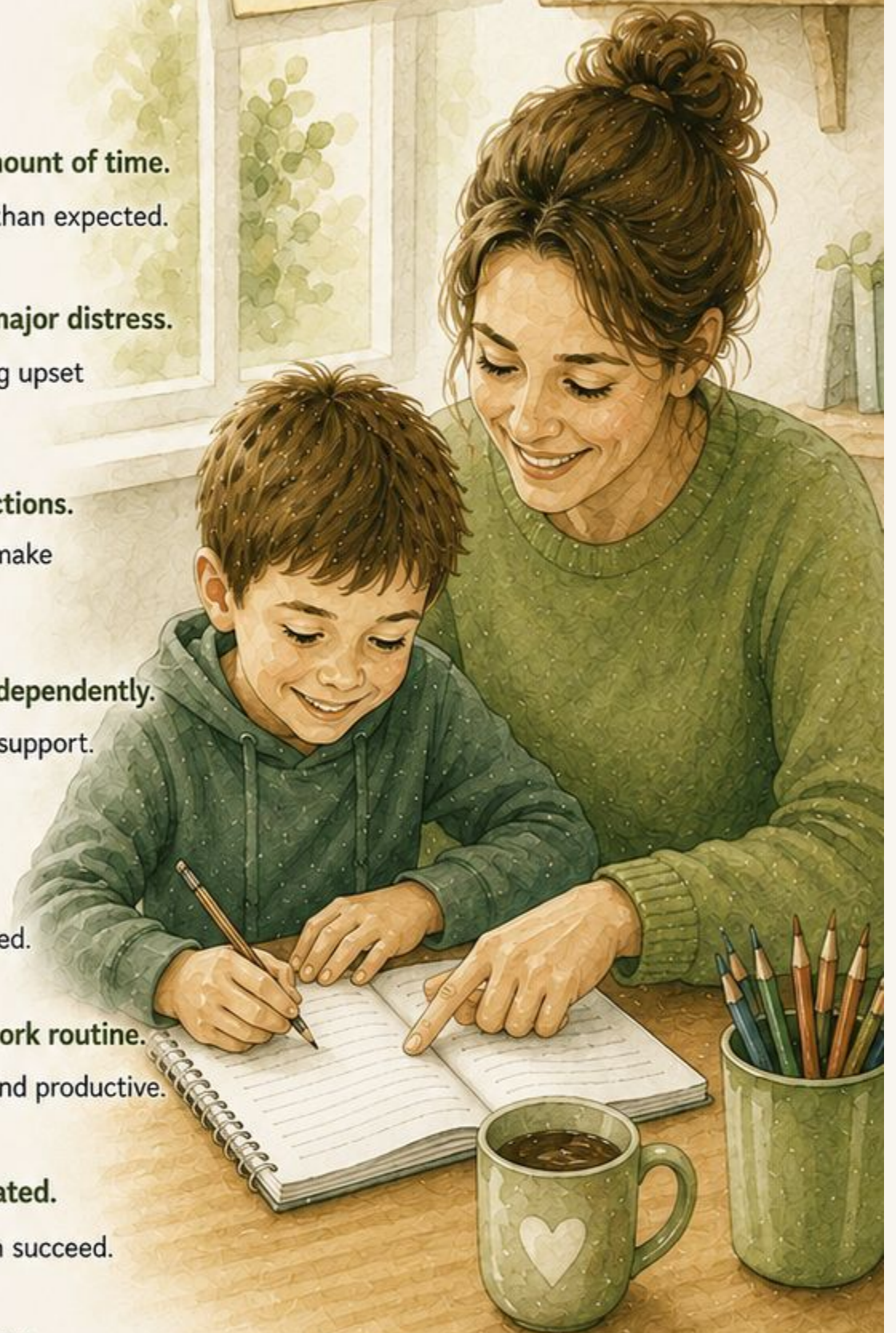
☐  **My child can complete most tasks independently.**
They can do the work with little or no support.

☐  **Homework is usually completed to a reasonable standard.**
They feel proud of what they've achieved.

☐  **We have a calm and positive homework routine.**
Homework time is generally peaceful and productive.

☐  **My child feels confident and motivated.**
They feel capable and believe they can succeed.

☐  **We communicate with school if there are ongoing difficulties.**
We seek support when needed.



What if I ticked several of these? ♥

If several of these statements describe your child, it may be worth speaking with their teacher. If difficulties continue despite appropriate support, a specialist assessment can help identify any underlying learning differences and provide the right support.

♥ *With the right support, every child can thrive.* ♥

Final Thoughts

The Goal of Homework

Homework isn't about more work.
It's about making progress. ♥



Understand
Practise and
remember what
you've learned.



Apply
Use what you know
in different ways.



Improve
Keep getting better
step by step.



Develop
Build independence
and problem-solving
skills.



Prepare
Get ready for future
learning and success.



We're
Proud of You!
♥

Homework helps me...

- ✓ Understand new ideas
- ✓ Build confidence
- ✓ Develop skills
- ✓ Solve problems
- ✓ Prepare for the future



Small steps
today,
big progress
tomorrow.
♥

Progress
Not
Perfection
♥

Well done!
Celebrate
your effort!
♥

♥ Homework is a bridge between today's learning and tomorrow's achievements. ♥

Still Concerned About Your Child's Learning?



Defining Dyslexia

Helping children and adults understand how they learn best.

If you're concerned about your child's learning, we're here to help. Get in touch to find out more about our specialist assessments and how we can support your family.

Contact us at:

www.definingdyslexia.org