

Advice for parents of SEN children

It's safe to say that we are living in uncertain times again. We are currently advised to stay at home and, for many of us, educating our children at home is a somewhat new experience. Children with SEN often require teaching to be adapted in order for them to access the curriculum so I thought I'd compile some basic tips to help you navigate the days ahead.

- If you are able to do nothing else, focus on the basics: reading, writing and maths.
- Game-based learning helps children to engage in their learning without you needing a teaching degree. Sites like Nessy (reading/spelling), Times Tables Rock Stars, Easi-maths or Maths Frame (<https://mathsframe.co.uk>) are all useful. Sit alongside them to act as a guide and give praise often (praise the effort, not the outcome!).
- Keep sessions short with frequent breaks (these could be quick movement breaks, a game of rock, paper, scissors or eye-spy, etc).
- Build in plenty of repetition and revision (but not necessarily delivered the same way every time).
- It's OK to sometimes scribe for them or let them dictate their work into a device if writing is a struggle.
- Make Maths practical: play 'shops', monopoly, do some baking (if you can buy flour!), etc.
- Project-based work is accessible for all children and creative tasks are really rewarding.
- Watching an episode of Blue Planet or Horrible Histories can help you widen the curriculum without you needing to become an expert on the Victorians – sit with them and talk about what you're watching.
- Stick to a routine (important for a lot of SEN kids especially in the current situation).
- Build in plenty of physical activity during the day. Joe Wicks is presenting a PE lesson every morning at 9am on YouTube. See if you can keep up with your children!
- Think about awarding 'merits' for good effort, independent learning, neat handwriting, not annoying your sister, etc.

Most of all, if you manage to cover some of the basics every day, you'll help your child keep the learning 'habit'.

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/family-zone/9-12/book-hopes/>