

Evidence-based resources for home-supported learning

Strategies to help parents support learning at home

Sharing strategies ordinarily used by Teaching Assistants (TAs), may help schools to describe ways in which parents can effectively support learning from home.

Approach summary

The first thing to establish with parents is an understanding that they are not expected to replace teachers or TAs, but they can be positioned to add value to what educators do.

Some students may require more assistance from their parents than other students during the period of home-supported learning, particularly younger students or students with additional learning needs.

There is good evidence on how to best assist students with their learning from the research on the effective use of TAs. These lessons about how to encourage learning may be useful for schools to share with parents who can:

- Encourage their child to be comfortable taking risks with their learning.
- Provide the right amount of support at the right time, in partnership with the teacher.
- Ensure their child retains responsibility for their learning; don't do the task for them.
- Use open-ended questions and allow enough thinking and response time.
- Give the least amount of help first to support students' ownership of the task.

Tips

- Review strategies employed by TAs and which of these might be suitable for parents to use during home-supported learning; emphasise what they can do, instead of listing 'what not to do'.
- Be mindful of how much support parents can provide as many will be balancing working from home, the support of one or more children and other demands on their time.
- Share these strategies with parents, such as tips for being ready to learn or examples of open-ended questions, so that they are supported to encourage learning.
- Clearly communicate with parents what you expect them to do in relation to these strategies, setting clear expectations about their role and your role as you would do with a TA.
- Invite feedback from parents about which strategies are useful and what other support they might need.

What should I consider?

- What strategies are achievable for parents to do to support their child?
- Can I set a protocol that enables parents to contact me when they observe their child requires additional support, as I would with a TA doing teaching triage?
- How can I monitor how much, and what types of support, students are receiving from their families?
- When I set tasks, can I also support families, for example, by providing suggestions about relevant open-ended questions?

This resource has been developed from our Guidance Report [Making best use of Teaching Assistants](#).