Frenchay Primary Do’s and Don’ts: Top Tips for Remote Learning

Guidance for Frenchay Families

DO

* Set up a daily family routine, including healthy eating, exercise and regular sleeping habits
* Stick to the routine - it’s something you can control and can make you feel more secure
* Agree in advance how all this is going to work, be open about the challenges for you, how can you and your child make this work, anticipate difficulties (e.g. getting off the screen) and plan how you can resolve these (use a timer); include consequences for not following the plan (5 minutes less time tomorrow)
* Get dressed for the day – some children even change into their uniform for ‘school’ (please don’t feel you have to though!)
* Set up a good work space with your child if you have the space. Plan how they can make it ‘their own’
* Create a daily or weekly timetable supported by the class timetable provided by your teacher
* Use movement breaks regularly and ‘chunk’ learning into manageable parts
* Positivity & humour go along way!
* Physical exercise is really important and helps learning too
* Make a clear distinction between work and ‘down time’ or play
* Set small achievable goals (task or time) as this is a great way to stay motivated and keep on track. Use a timer if this helps and choose appropriate rewards when a goal is achieved
* Promote literacy by reading to your child and by modelling reading yourself
* Pat yourselves on the back even if you managed just a few minutes sitting with your child and discussing the learning
* Celebrate success by using praise rather than criticism
* Promote, recognise and celebrate resilience and independence as well as effort and outcomes
* Keep in close contact with class teachers and ask for help when you need it – even for IT Support
* Remember that while academic learning is important, remaining safe and well is the most important priority for everyone. Learning how to cope with this crisis and overcome barriers and challenges is also important learning
* Encourage a growth mindset & independence in your child. If they face a task and they can’t do it try re-watching the input or looking at the example again; can anyone else in the house or over the phone help; can the internet show you a model; if not show your child how to contact the teacher and move on to something else. Try saying phrases like, "OK, so you don’t get it yet but what could you do to help?” before prompting the list above if needed.
* Limit and monitor TV watching, gaming, social media and computer time – these make great rewards and incentives – agree a time allocation in advance, use a timer – stick to it!
* Plan in time for you to talk to your child about their learning and his/her activities at the beginning and/or end of the day “How far did you get with your learning tasks today? What did you discover? What was hard? Did you find out something new? What can we do to make tomorrow better?”
* If you are able to spend more time with your child, still leave them to work independently – just as would happen at school. If you have other children, split your time between them; one could be working and the other could have downtime (if this is possible).
* Review the day over dinner, both in terms of learning but also in relation to how you’re feeling and how well you both kept to the plan at the start of the day – use praise and problem solve any issues together for tomorrow

DON’T

* Forget the power of daylight (not much sunshine around at present) so get outside (but do so within the guidelines)
* Compare your siblings or compare yourself to other families. Everyone’s context and situation is different and individual
* Put too much pressure on yourself or your child - we are going through a major upheaval to our routines and way of life. Experts advise that it’s a good idea to slow down, find beauty, enjoy unexpected benefits and express gratitude by helping others.
* Focus on the work but make sure you focus on the child. This can be difficult to keep in mind when a general parenting philosophy is ‘to do well in school.’ Don’t over emphasize ‘getting everything done’ over the wellbeing (not to mention creativity, curiosity and intrinsic motivation) of your child
* Transfer your stress and negativity to your child – really tricky as you may be under pressure – but it is much better for your child to do less better, than try to do everything but it leading to a less than harmonious environment
* Forget you’re the grown up – if things go wrong you need to remain calm. If things are escalating it is vital you recognise this and walk away to give time and space to let everyone calm down.