



Home Learning Guidance for Early Years

This guide has been put together for the parents and carers of children in our Early Years Classes. It contains information and links to other sources of information that we hope will be useful to those who care for the children during school closure.

The Home Learning Pack

Your child has been given the following items to support them with their home learning:

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|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| • a scrapbook | • a pencil | • letter formation guide |
| • seeds or peas to plant | • a marble (R) | • number formation guide (R) |
| • cotton wool | • colour charts | • a white board and pen |
| • a sound mat (R) | • a tricky word mat (R) | |

(R) denotes items that have been given to pupils in Reception

The scrapbook and pencil can be used to record the children’s challenges, alongside Tapestry, during the duration of the school closure. There is no set way of recording on paper Early Years; we are guided by how the children wish to record and suggest that this continues during their time at home. The other items in the home learning pack can be used to complete the challenges that have been set.

The online learning platform Purple Mash will also be used and will have additional tasks for the children to complete.

What will home learning look like?

We are aiming to make home learning as fun and engaging as we can. There will be some tasks that need to be completed daily, and other activities that will be completed over the course of the week. We appreciate that there needs to be some flexibility in the way that home learning takes place, to both meet the needs of each child and to be considerate of the resources that children have available to them. As a result, we have designed a challenge approach to home learning. This approach will enable the children (and adults) to have a choice in which activities are completed and in how they are presented. The children will be challenged to see how many points they can build up during the school closure by completing the challenge activities.

Children in Nursery and Reception are being asked to complete at least two challenges each day. These challenges are in addition to the daily tasks.

It is hoped that by only completing two challenges each day, there will still be time for the children to have self-directed play which they would usually have as part of their school day.

Daily Tasks

The daily tasks for children in Early Years will include reading and writing (specific details will be given on the weekly challenge sheet). We know that not all children enjoy reading and writing so would like to share some creative ideas that can provide some variety and interest when it comes to completing these daily tasks:

<p>Help your child to create a cosy space for reading. It could be a dark space where reading and stories are shared by torchlight. It might be a sofa or bed piled high with blankets and cushions.</p>	<p>Stick up the letters from your child’s name or a tricky word around a room. Once they have been found, challenge your child to use them to spell their name or the word correctly.</p>	<p>Writing doesn’t always have to involve pencils and paper. You could try writing in a tray of rice with your finger, use water and a paintbrush on the floor outside, or even find a stick and try mud writing.</p>
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Create a treasure hunt for your child with written clues that they can read and follow.	Use a felt tip pen to write letters on pebbles, dried beans, shells or coloured pieces of paper and use them instead of magnetic letters for spelling.	
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Promoting the characteristics of effective learning at home

In addition to continuing academic development, the challenges that have been designed to continue the children’s development of the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

“The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.” -Taken from ‘Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage’

As your child works through their challenges, you can further support their development in the following ways (taken from ‘Development Matters’):

<p>Playing & Exploring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Play with children. Encourage them to explore, and show your own interest in discovering new things. •Help children as needed to do what they are trying to do, without taking over or directing. • Join in play sensitively, fitting in with children’s ideas. •Model pretending an object is something else, and help develop roles and stories. •Encourage children to try new activities and to judge risks for themselves. •Pay attention to how children engage in activities -- the challenges faced, the effort, thought, learning and enjoyment. Talk more about the process than products. •Talk about how you and the children get better at things through effort and practice, and what we all can learn when things go wrong. 	<p>Active Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Support children to choose their activities – what they want to do and how they will do it. •Stimulate children’s interest through shared attention. •Help children to become aware of their own goals, make plans, and to review their own progress and successes. Describe what you see them trying to do, and encourage children to talk about their own processes and successes. •Be specific when you praise, especially noting effort such as how the child concentrates, tries different approaches, persists, solves problems, and has new ideas. •Children develop their own motivations when you give reasons and talk about learning. 	<p>Creating & Thinking Critically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Use the language of thinking and learning: think, know, remember, forget, idea, makes sense, plan, learn, find out, confused, figure out, trying to do. •Model being a thinker, showing that you don’t always know, are curious and sometimes puzzled, and can think and find out. •Encourage open-ended thinking by not settling on the first ideas: What else is possible? •Always respect children’s efforts and ideas, so they feel safe to take a risk with a new idea. •Talking aloud helps children to think and control what they do. Model self-talk, describing your actions in play. •Give children time to talk and think. •Value questions, talk, and many possible responses, without rushing toward answers too quickly. •Support children’s interests over time, reminding them of previous approaches and encouraging them to make connections between their experiences. •Sustained shared thinking helps children to explore ideas and make links. Follow children’s lead in conversation and think about things together. •Encourage children to describe problems they encounter, and to suggest ways to solve the problem. • Talk with children about what they are doing, how they plan to do it, what worked well and what they would change next time.
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Supporting Reception children to write

Some of the challenges for pupils in Reception will involve them writing. In Reception, we focus on building the children's confidence and skills in writing sounds, then words, and then sentences.

Other than the 'tricky words', which the children are taught to read and write discretely, we encourage the children to write words using the sounds that they have been taught, which can initially seem strange to parents and carers. The English language is a complex one to learn and it is important that we don't overwhelm our children with more knowledge than they can process and use. We call this kind of writing 'phonetically plausible' and would like you to support the children at home in the same way.

An example of a phonetically plausible sentence:

The sun iz shighning in the skigh. (The sun is shining in the sky.)

The children in Reception have been taught all of the sounds from phase 2 and phase 3 of 'Letters and Sounds'. A copy of these sounds can be found on the sound mat in the Home Learning Pack. It is these sounds that we encourage the children to use when writing their own ideas.

As well as encouraging the children to write words which are phonetically plausible, we also encourage the children to use finger spaces between words and to use simple punctuation such as capital letters and full stops.

I need some advice; how can I contact my child's teacher?

We would like to reassure you that the teachers at school are still here to support the learning of the children at our school. We may not be able to see you in person, but we are still very much around.

We would like to utilise Tapestry during the school closure and use it as a communication tool between home and school. As well as using it to record the challenges that the children complete, please also use it as a way of contacting your child's teachers. If you need to contact us, please do so by uploading a new observation with the title: Question about home learning. We aim to reply as promptly as possible.

Alternatively, you may wish to email us at hello@oulton.leeds.sch.uk but please be aware that this method of contact may take slightly longer to us respond to as it doesn't get sent directly to specific teachers.

Accessing Tapestry & Adding Observations

Tapestry can be accessed either from the website (tapestryjournal.com) or through the free Tapestry app (available on android and apple).



To access Tapestry online and add an observation, go to the website: <https://tapestryjournal.com/> and enter the email address and password that you created when your child started at school (if you are having trouble – please email us at: hello@oulton.leeds.sch.uk and we will assign you a new login). Once logged in, you will see an 'add observation' button that once clicked will take you to the observation page. Here you can give your observation a title (relating to the challenge, activity or question) and document anything written in the 'notes' section. Photographs and videos can be uploaded too by adding them in the media section:

[+ Add Observation](#)

A screenshot of the 'Media' section in the Tapestry app. It shows a text box with the instruction 'Drag and drop files here or use the Add Files button below'. Below the text box are three buttons: 'Add Files' (blue), 'Start Upload' (green), and 'Delete Selected Media' (red).

Click 'add files' and find the relevant files on your computer or device and then 'start upload'. This will add your selected photographs and videos to the observation. Remember to click the save button at the bottom of the page to save the observation.

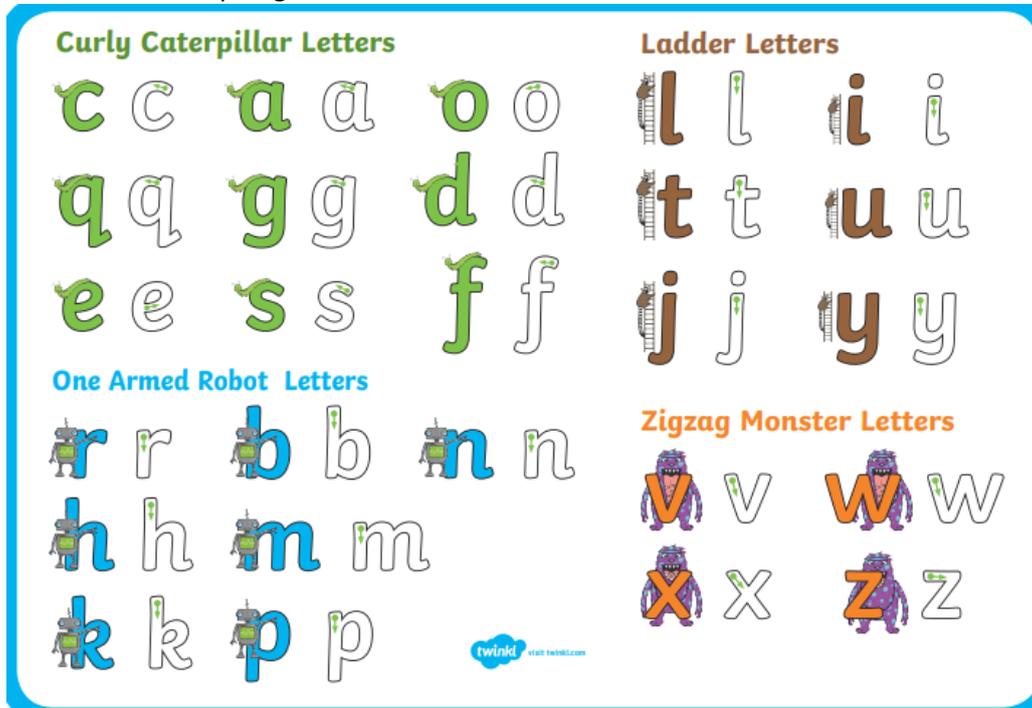
[Save](#)

To access Tapestry on the app and add an observation, firstly download the app onto your chosen device (phone/tablet) and open the app. You will be prompted to enter your email address and password or pin number that you created when your child started at school (if you are having trouble – please email us at: hello@oulton.leeds.sch.uk and we will assign you a new login). Once logged in, you will see an '+' button at the top right-hand side of the home screen. Once clicked, this will take you to the observation page. Here you can give your observation a title (relating to the challenge,

activity or question) and document anything written in the 'notes' section. Photographs and videos can be uploaded too using the tool options: 'Take a photo' 'Record a Video' or 'Add from Library'. Photographs and videos already taken and stored on your device can be added by selecting the 'Add from Library' option. Remember to click 'upload' (top right-hand side of screen) to save your observation.

Letter and Number Formation

When practising letter formation, it can be useful to practise groups of letters which are all formed similarly. We call these 'letter families'. Here is a helpful guide for the letter families:



There is letter formation guidance for each letter in the Home Learning Packs.

Numbers can often end up being written backwards when children are in the Early Years. We use the following rhymes to help to encourage correct formation:

Number Formation 0 to 10 with Rhymes

Around to my left to find my hero, back to the top, I've made a zero.

A downward stroke, my that's fun. Now I've made the number one.

Half a heart says "I love you." Add a line. Now I've made the number two.

Around the tree, around the tree, now I've made the number three.

Down and across and down once more, now I've made the number four.

Draw the hat, the back and the belly. It's a five. Watch out, it might come alive!

Bend down low to pick up sticks. Now I've made the number six.

Across the sky and down from heaven. Now I've made the number seven.

Make an "S" and close the gate. Now you've made the number eight.

Make an oval and a line. Now I've made the number nine.

A downward stroke, that's my one. Add a zero, that's my number ten done!



Purple Mash

We have set up an online Purple Mash account for pupils to access. Purple Mash is an online teaching and learning platform where pupils can access a range of games and activities to support their learning. In Early Years, the children will mainly be using the 'mini mash' part of the site and additional challenges will be set for them here. Please see the separate handout for details of how it can be accessed.

Other sources of information and activities

- Oxford Owl: <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/> - offers lots of guidance, games and activities relating to phonics, reading and maths for children in Early Years and Primary School. They also have some online reading books in the section 'free ebook library'. To access them you can sign up for free.
- Travel to Tokyo with Get Set: <https://www.getset.co.uk/> - Get set is the British Olympic Association and British Paralympic Association's youth engagement programme. Their 'Travel to Tokyo' has been launched to inspire 5-11 year olds and their families to get active in the run up to the Tokyo 2020 games.
- Twinkl: <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/> - has lots of activities, games and information for a whole range of subjects. It also has some good worksheets relating to letter and number formation. It is currently offering free access to parents affected by school closures.
- Popular Early Years trainer and practitioner has developed a guide for 100 things to do indoors. This is FREE and has some lovely ideas for rainy days or days when you might not be able to get out of the house. It can be downloaded at <https://www.spreadthehappiness.co.uk/product/100-things-to-do-indoors/>

