



# Banbridge Academy Learning Support

**Supporting Pupils with SEN working  
from Home**

## Introduction

We live in difficult and unprecedented times, but our vision at Banbridge Academy is to ensure that all pupils are cared for individually. We are aware that the situation we currently face is both worrying and challenging, but we want to ensure that parents and carers feel adequately equipped with supporting the learning of their child while working from home.

*The Learning Support Team have put together this short document highlighting some top tips with how you can support the learning of pupils with SEN while they are working from home.*

## Principles of SEN Teaching

At Banbridge Academy, we encourage our staff to **cover** 5 basic principles when teaching pupils with Special Educational Needs:

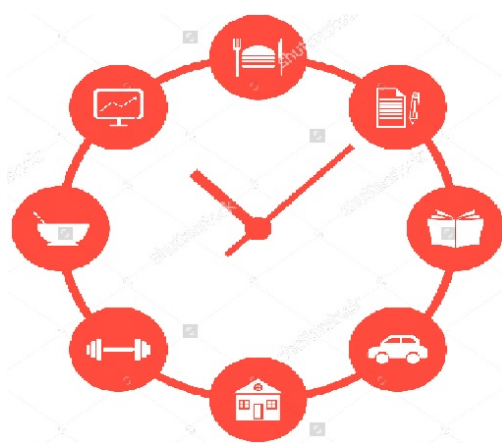
- C – Communication: give simple instructions, give one instruction at a time or write down as appropriate.
- O – Opportunities for Groupwork: use mixed ability groups to help support learning and help improve social interaction.
- V – Vigilance: look out for key signs, for example: continual disruptive behaviour, lack of concentration and focus and lack of written work. If concerned about a pupil, follow the referral guide.
- E – Environment: provide a supportive yet challenging environment for all SEN pupils.
- R – Refer any concerns: contact either the Learning Support Coordinator if you have any concerns.

We acknowledge that achieving these 5 principles at home are not easy, so we have put together this Top 10 List of things you can do support your child's learning at home.

### **Number 1: Maintain Routine.**

Routine is extremely important for children with SEN. Encourage them to get up early and follow their usual school timetable as much as they can. This is extremely important in the early stages of school closure, as the habits developed in the early days will be much easier to maintain over a longer period of time.

Over time, you can change the timetable to suit your needs better. Make a colour coded timetable and put it up on the fridge. Accountability will help, as well as a joint effort.



Common ways to start learning is by asking 'why'. When there is a purpose, pupils will buy into the learning more. If possible, establish a workstation which can become the 'classroom

at home'. Keep some structure to the normal school day such as break time and lunch time. Use a bell if you have one or even a whistle to simulate the end of class.

## **Number 2: Planning and Preparation.**

Work in partnership with your child to plan and prepare what work you want to carry out. Work out what resources you need, and this will help avoid confrontation and lack of progress. Discussing plans the day before, or a week ahead will also help keep structure and routine.



## **Number 3: Set realistic goals.**

You will not be able to deliver the whole curriculum in a week, or even a month. Even talking about completing all the work will increase anxiety. Setting goals that are realistic will be helpful to achieving meaningful outcomes and reducing stress.

## **Number 4: Try different learning methods.**

Some pupils will be visual learners, others auditory, or even logical. The point is - every child is different! We would encourage variety when approaching learning. Just as we encourage a range of different subjects each day, we also encourage a trying a range of different resources. Use YouTube (responsibly) to research topics, play games on Cool Maths Games or look at the key components of the course through BBC Bitesize. There are even some very good podcasts out that there will aid learning. Just as in class, teachers will do different things to consolidate learning and maintain concentration, this is helpful at home too!



## **Number 5: Lead by Example.**



Teaching isn't an easy job, so make sure you look after yourself too. Healthy eating habits (for both home teacher and pupil), positive mental attitude (for both home teacher and pupil) and breaks for relaxation and exercise should underpin what you are doing at home.

Some simple principles apply here:

- Positivity from you will breed positivity in your child.
- Encouragement from you will help maintain a positive work effort in your child.
- Challenge from you will help your child to become the best version of themselves.

## **Number 6: Encourage positivity, not negativity.**

While we referred to this point in number 5, I think it is worth mentioning again. Due to the fact we live in uncertain times, anxiety levels are expected to be much higher throughout the population. I have included below some helpful tips of how we can relieve anxiety and encourage positivity!

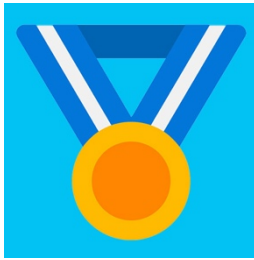


## **Number 7: Set High Expectations.**

Setting high expectations mean that pupils know what they need to do, giving them confidence, helping to keep them on task, decreasing stress and creating a positive classroom culture at home. This should be supported by good communication to ensure positive outcomes.



## **Number 8: Reward and Recognise Achievement.**



At a basic level, you need to make the learning experience as positive as possible; building self-esteem and praising small strides as well as giant leaps. Think of your own ways to reward achievement: gold stars, rocket charts and target boards can be as motivating as sweets or treats. Instant rewards help a child to associate the reward with the task. But don't praise too much too quickly, you might run out of sweets!

## **Number 9: Create a culture of learning.**

Pupils will easily identify the home as not being school, meaning it is important to develop a culture of learning that they can buy into. It is important that you make sure all instructions are clear, precise and understood. If you ask your child a question, allow time to think and process responses to questions and instructions. Ask open questions to avoid yes or no answers, this will allow children to develop their understanding.



## **Number 10: Believe in yourself!**

When supporting pupils with SEN, it is important that you create a home and learning environment which is safe and secure. It is not easy to juggle home life while supporting your child's education but believe in yourself and believe in your child. You are the most valuable resource your child has for support and reassurance. *We hope this resource is helpful in some way, and if you need any further help or support for your child with SEN, do not hesitate to contact Mr Clarke at school.*