



Hello! Welcome to our second 'Supporting all learners in school' newsletter. These newsletters will continue to be shared each term to inform you of some of the things that we have in place at St Mary Magdalene to support all of our learners to make progress. We will also share some top tips for you to use at home to support your child's/children's learning.

### Visual resources



In school we use a wide range of different visual resources to support the needs of all learners;

- **Whole class visual timetables-** used to let all children know their routine for the day and any changes that might occur.
- **Individual now and next boards or individual visual timetables-** used for children who need additional support with remembering or understanding their routine. Now and Next boards are carried around school by the adults supporting the child.
- **Lanyards with visuals on them-** worn by staff to support particular children with social communication difficulties to support the communication of expectations for them at a particular time.
- **PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)-** used as advised by ASD Outreach/ the speech and language therapy team- to teach non-verbal/ minimally verbal children the benefit of communication. A picture card is exchanged with an adult for something that is motivating for the child.
- **Visual checklists-** used to support children with attention or memory difficulties- helps children to remember what is expected in a learning task.
- **Social stories-** used to support children with social communication difficulties- a social story is a short description of a particular situation, event or activity which include specific information about what to expect in that situation and why.
- **Comic strip conversations-** used to support children with social communication difficulties. Comic strip conversations use stick figures to represent social interactions and abstract aspects of a conversation. People draw as they talk and use these drawings to learn about different social situations.

### Contacting the SEND Team

If you have any concerns about your child/children's progress please firstly speak to your child's class teacher. If you have spoken to your child's class teacher and need further help or advice then please book an appointment with the Inclusion Team via the school office.

Miss Hoon (Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion) is available at the Peninsula Campus on Mondays, Thursdays and Wednesday mornings. She is available at the Woolwich Campus on Tuesdays, Fridays and Wednesday afternoons.

Miss Roberts (SEND Admin and Interventions Assistant) is available at the Peninsula Campus on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and at the Woolwich Campus on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Miss Hoon or Miss Roberts will be in touch as soon as possible after your enquiry is made.

### Recommended websites to support learning at home:

<https://www.topmarks.co.uk> – Maths games for children from ages 3-14.

<https://blockly.games>- introduces children to the basics of computer coding through interactive games.

<https://www.kiddle.co>- a search engine designed for children- search results are filtered to make sure they're age-appropriate and websites written especially for children are at the top of the search results.



## Supporting your child/children with spellings at home

We know that some children find it particularly difficult to remember their spellings. Below are a few tips that might be useful at home to help with spelling practice:

**Highlight the hard bit** -Frequently, there will be one part of a word that trips up your child each time. Look at the word together and highlight the part that they find particularly tricky. For example:

Nigh**t** Separate Was Recei**v**e Weir**d**

What **T**wo Friend Sa**i**d Chea**p**

Or there may be two parts that need attention, for instance; **A**ccommodate **A**ddress **N**ecessary

Once you've done the highlighting together, get them to write out the word again without looking. This time they'll be more focused on getting that tricky bit right, and will be able to remember how it looks.

**Break it down**- Try breaking down polysyllabic words to make each syllable easier to remember. Even young children may be doing this at school – they might call syllables 'beats'. Help them decipher how many 'beats' or syllables there are in a word by clapping the word together, one clap per syllable.

So, for **two-syllable** words...

Danger Dan / ger

Windmill Wind / mill

Option Op / tion

And for **three-syllable** words...

Relation Re / la / tion

Beautiful Beau / ti / ful

**Create pictures in the mind**- It's a well-researched memory trick: if you can conjure up a visual image, what you're trying to remember (in this case spellings!) may come more readily.

For example, if your child is learning 'bank' but writing 'banc', help them remember it's a 'kicking K' by saying, "I kicked my legs into the bank". If they're writing 'cat' as 'kat' remind them it's a 'curly c' by saying, "The cat likes to curl up and go to sleep". Encourage your child to invent their own ways of remembering words; if they have thought up the image themselves, it will be a more powerful tool.

**Make it an acrostic**- Sometimes, visualising a difficult word in a different way can suddenly make it stick. Create a from each letter of a word and turn it into an acrostic, which can be easier to remember than the word itself. Try to have your child make up their own!

**Because: Big Elephants Can Always Understand Small Elephants**

**Ocean: Only Cats' Eyes Are Narrow**

**Rhythm: Rhythm Helps Your Two Hips Move**

**In the palm of your hands**-If your child is a **kinaesthetic learner** (in other words they learn best through doing), ask them to write each letter of the word into the palm of their hand or onto their leg with their finger. With enough repetitions, they'll remember how the word felt to write (this is known as muscle memory).

**Sing the word**- Simply learn the word by saying or singing the letters out loud, developing a melody. This melody should then imprint in your child's memory; if they forget a spelling they will still remember how the word's rhythm and sound, which will serve as a prompt.