



WORKING WITH YOUR CHILD

We recommend that parents read the Effort and Attainment Report (Autumn and Spring) and the Full Written Report (Summer) with their children. This helps your child to understand that you are partners in their education and that you expect them to do their best and will support them in doing so. Here are a few hints about how you can use these reports to support your child and help them to take responsibility for their own progress.

Praise where praise is due. Children have a very busy and varied life at school. Each child has strengths in different areas and these are always worth recognising. It is especially valuable to give credit when your child has worked hard to overcome a particular problem. Well-earned praise makes a child aware that you value their achievements and thus boosts self-confidence.

Highlight areas where effort grades are a little disappointing. It is important to point out areas where it is clear that your child could be doing better, whilst being realistic about what is possible. Ask your child why they think this has happened. There may be very good reasons why effort in one particular area has slipped. Discussing this calmly with you at home may be a good way for your child to express these, highlighting what can be done to improve things, for example, setting some achievable targets or suggesting that your child talks to the teacher about it. Help your child to take responsibility for this rather than intervening yourself if possible. It is much more rewarding for pupils when progress comes from their own efforts and the progress is more likely to last.

Discuss attainment grades honestly. Some children will have worked hard but their attainment is not very high. This will be because they have a particular difficulty with that subject, the topic being studied, or a language barrier. They will be supported by their teachers at school to help them to do as well as they can, but it is also helpful if your child can suggest anything that they feel could be done to support them further. They should be helped to understand that a high effort grade shows that they have worked hard and that they are achieving as well as they can; that this is praiseworthy and as much as anyone expects from them. Where the effort grade is low, children need to understand that, whatever attainment grade they have achieved, they could be doing better and they should then be encouraged to set targets for themselves for improvement.

Encourage your child to take their learning further. When a report highlights areas where your child shows particular interest or ability, it is helpful to encourage this by talking about it and showing an interest yourself. If you can, support their interest, perhaps through taking them to a museum or gallery, a theatre or library, helping them to search the internet or watching an interesting television programme with them. This will help them to develop a spirit of enquiry and to understand that learning is a life skill, that reaches far beyond the classroom. Encourage your child to feedback these experiences to their teacher's and peers at school.