



Special Needs Tip: Things to try at home based on strategies we use in school to help support your child's learning. We hope that these ideas might be helpful, but there is no obligation or expectation for you to use them.

A prompted start

At school, we often use what we call a 'prompted start'.

1. This means after the instructions and teaching have been delivered to the whole class or group that an adult sits with an individual child and goes through the instructions again to check that they understand and have all the equipment they might need.

They may

- Ask your child to explain to them what they think they need to do. Allowing your child to talk this through helps them to work out what to do and helps us to pick up any misunderstandings and sort them out before your child starts work.
At home: Once you have explained to your child what they need to do, ask them to explain it back to you, so that you can check that they have understood.
 - Model what your child needs to do
At home: Try doing the first sum or few sums together, so your child can see what to do before they try on their own. Or plan the first sentence or sentences together so they don't have a blank sheet when they start writing.
 - Set a checklist or task management board with your child, so they have a list of what they need to do and can tick off the parts of the task as they do it. For those who can't read well, we might draw a series of little pictures to remind them what to do.
At home: On a sheet of paper, work with your child to make a list of what they need to do to complete the task or job. Add little sketches, if you want to help them remember what the lists says. Once they have finished each part of the task, they can tick it off.
 - Leave them for a time to process the instructions, before we offer help and support.
At home: Remember we don't always start a job immediately; we often need a bit of thinking time. Give your child, some thinking time.
2. Once your child is confident, they know what to do and have everything they need, we leave them to work independently for a short time with the reassurance that we will come and check on them. We may say 'Five and I'll be back' meaning that we will come back to check on them in five minutes. As children get older, we try and get them to work on their own for longer periods. How long they can work for depends on their enthusiasm and interest, also things like being tired or worried. We try and make it clear that they can always ask for help, if they need it.
At home: Encourage your child to try and work on their own for short periods. Sometimes, it can help to set a timer so they know how long they need to work for on their own. Start with a short time, like five minutes and increase it gradually.

