

# Surviving the SATs

## A Guide for Parents and Carers

Positive health and wellbeing, including mental health, contribute to a child's ability to thrive and achieve. Key Stage 2 SATs can be a trigger for stress in children, teachers and parent alike. SATs are important but preparing for the tests shouldn't take over your child's life.

### It's Good to Talk

The most positive thing you can do during this time is to talk to them and where possible, provide a relaxed home environment. Help them to understand that SATs are a positive opportunity to show what they've learnt and can even be fun. Try to keep everything in perspective, as a nervous child may not do their best.

### How Can Parents Help?

- Direct any questions or concerns you have about SATs to your child's teacher, rather than worry your child.
- Try to provide a quiet place for home learning and revision that is as free from distractions as possible.
- Encourage your child to talk to their teacher or another adult in school they trust if they express persistent anxiety about the SATs. Remember that a small amount of anxiety is normal and not harmful.
- Keep up daily reading - either by them reading alone or you reading to them. Talk together about the books, characters, and storylines. Encourage them to express their own opinions about the text.
- Play mental maths games - on the way home, in the car and so on.
- Encourage your child to use the revision links on the school website.
- Keeping everything ticking over normally. Dilute any feelings that SATs are scary and important by sticking to her normal routine and keeping up her regular out-of-school activities.

- Keep it in proportion. Even if they don't do as well as they were expecting, their teacher knows what they are capable of and will give their 'teacher assessment' to the secondary school that your child will be attending. It will not blight their life for ever!
- Stay positive. You never know, your child might actually enjoy them!

### Stress Busting Tips

Exams and relaxation are two concepts that don't naturally go hand-in-hand. The pressure to do well can dampen the enjoyment of learning for all children, regardless of their ability. This is why our teachers underline the importance of taking time out to rest when children are studying for SATs.

There are many ways you can help your child relax, from sport to listening to music. Encourage them to continue with clubs and other hobbies that they enjoy, and have at least one day a week that's completely free from school work. Allow your child some 'down time' during their SATs. Relaxing the mind and body will make for a calmer, happier learner.

Setting aside some time for your child to unwind and participate in activities they enjoy, is just as important as revision. So schedule regular breaks, which will help to motivate them.

- Take your child on plenty of walks during their breaks. They help stimulate the mind and a blast of air will really refresh their brain cells.
- It is extremely important that your child get a decent night's sleep. Ensure that they stop doing work and turn off any electrical devices e.g. mobiles, tablets, xbox etc. at least an hour and a half before bedtime, otherwise their mind will be too active for sleep.
- Help them to unwind at bedtime with plenty of relaxing bubble baths, soothing music and fun bedtime stories.
- Don't give your child any sugary foods before bedtime. Hot milk is a great drink as it contains Tryptophan which promotes sleep.
- Listen to your child's worries and encourage them to be open with you. Plenty of hugs, reassurance and positive encouragement will go a long way to helping them to relax.
- During the SATs week, make sure that your child has a good breakfast and plenty to drink. The school also provide a SATS breakfast each morning. This gives the children a chance to meet and chat over a bacon or sausage bap before their tests.

- Ensure that your child arrives at school in good time so they don't feel rushed or stressed.
- Model positive language and behaviour - never talk about 'pass' or 'fail'.
- Give your child something to look forward to after SATs, such as a day out or a special treat, regardless of their results.

### Remember

SATs results don't tell the whole story.

SATs focus on what children know about Maths and English. They won't reflect how talented they are in other subjects e.g. Science, Art or P.E.

SATs last for one week. Just one or two papers lasting 30-60 minutes each day.

Our Family Support Worker is also available for parents and children to talk to about any concerns they have.