

Parents! 5 Top tips to engage your children with maths

KS1

Is maths really that important at home?

Parents have a great opportunity to develop their children's maths skills at home by involving them in everyday activities. If your children can help you find the best deal for your car insurance or work out which supermarket deal is cheapest, then it's helping them understand maths in real life. It also helps develop their basic maths and problem solving skills, which are really important in the UK primary curriculum.

Don't underestimate yourself, or the power you have as a parent getting involved in your child's learning. Ofsted have specifically stated that parental engagement raises pupil achievement.

So here are some tips and ideas to show how you can improve your child's KS2 maths skills at home.

1 Start with a positive mindset

Do you ever hear yourself saying "I'm really bad at maths" or "I just didn't get maths in school"?

It's difficult to understand just how much children will pick up on any negativity towards particular subjects from their parents. Unfortunately, this can be a real barrier to their learning. We advise parents to try and use positive language around their children such as "don't worry, it's okay to make mistakes, we all do", also be as patient as possible with your them when they're doing their homework.

You may not mean to be negative, but your children may take it to heart. Positivity can go a long way to improving their attitude towards maths!

2 Use maths talk every day

Talking about maths is really important for your child's mathematical development. As your child is at KS1 level, you want to start off with the basics - don't overwhelm them.

Whenever you have the opportunity, try to include maths talk in their lives. This is easily done when they are playing with physical objects as you can reinforce their counting skills. For example, how many pennies are you holding? Or what shape is that object? When counting, reinforce the last number they counted as this can help their mathematical development further, for example "one, two three...three cars." Just like children's TV shows do.

Two easy concepts to develop with your children are doubling/halving and adding/subtracting. Again, you could use physical objects such as food to reinforce this.

It's as simple as asking your child to count the number of chicken nuggets or peas (or any other food!) on their plate at dinner time. and then you can ask them things like:

- "If I doubled the number of chicken nuggets on your plate right now, how many would you have?"
- "If I ate half the peas on your plate for you, how many would you have left?"
- "If we added all of my chicken nuggets to your chicken nuggets, how many would we have altogether?"

Even better if you can turn this into a game to engage your children at mealtimes. You can even reward them with more nuggets!