You're Doing Better Than You Think

A Gentle Guide to Understanding Your Child and Finding Confidence in Everyday Learning

Hello, and welcome

A Different Way to See Learning

They Learn Differently – And That's Okay

If you've picked up this booklet, there's a good chance you've had a moment of doubt. We all have.
You might have wondered if your child is keeping up.
You might have compared them to others.
You might have asked yourself quietly...
"Am I doing this right?"

If that sounds familiar, you are not alone.
And more importantly—you are not getting it wrong.
Children don't all learn in the same way, and they don't all learn at the same pace.
Some talk early, some take their time.
Some write quickly, others prefer to draw, build, or explain things in their own way.
All of these are valid. All of these are learning.

This booklet is here to gently shift the way you see those moments.
Instead of looking for what your child isn't doing yet,
we begin to notice what they can do—

- how they communicate
- how they think
- how they make sense of the world

Because when you understand how your child learns, everything starts to feel a little calmer, a little clearer, and a lot more manageable.

You don't need to have all the answers.
You don't need to do everything perfectly.
You just need to keep showing up, noticing, and supporting your child in the way that works for them.

And that... is more than enough.

Sometimes you don't need to do more. You just need to understand the value of what you're already doing.

Take your time with this booklet.
There's no rush—just small shifts that can make a big difference.

SECTION 1

Every Child Learns Differently



Not all children learn in the same way —
or at the same pace.

It's so easy to look at other children and wonder if your own child is keeping up.

But learning isn't a race, and children don't all follow the same path.

Children show their curiosity in different ways. Some might:

- love words and stories
- need to move and explore
- enjoy building and making things
- prefer to watch before joining in

Every child brings their own strengths, interests and ways of making sense of the world.
And those differences are worth understanding, not changing.



A gentle reminder

Your child doesn't have to learn like everyone else to make meaningful progress.

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SECTION 1

Learning Isn't a Straight Line



Some skills develop quickly. Others need a little more time.

Have you ever noticed how your child can surprise you?

One day, something seems difficult. Then, almost unexpectedly, they show you just how much they've understood.
Learning doesn't always happen in neat little steps.

Growing in different ways

A child might be confident with numbers but find writing difficult.

They might have wonderful ideas but need help putting them into words.

Or they might spend ages watching something before feeling ready to try it themselves.

All of these experiences can be part of learning.



A gentle reminder

Progress isn't always about doing something new. Sometimes it's about growing in confidence, making connections or understanding something a little more deeply.

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SECTION 1

Different Ways of Learning

Learning can look different from one child to another.

Have you ever noticed how children approach the same activity in completely different ways?

One might ask lots of questions. Another might pick something up and start experimenting. Someone else might prefer to watch before having a go.

There is no single way to explore an idea.



Talking and Listening

Some children love discussing ideas, asking questions and telling stories. Conversation helps them explore what they're thinking.



Moving and Exploring

Others enjoy discovering things through movement, touching, investigating and trying things for themselves.



Making and Creating

Building, drawing, designing and experimenting give children opportunities to turn their ideas into something they can see and explore.



Watching and Noticing

Some children prefer to observe before joining in. Watching carefully, noticing details and thinking things through are valuable parts of learning too.

A gentle reminder

Your child may use all these approaches at different times.
The important thing isn't finding one way they learn best. It's giving them different opportunities to explore, discover and grow.

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SECTION 1

Understanding Your Own Child



Sometimes the best way to understand learning is simply to watch.

Think about the moments when your child is happiest and most involved in what they're doing.
Perhaps they're building something, telling you about a favourite subject, exploring outdoors or quietly working something out.
These everyday moments can tell you so much about how your child thinks, what interests them and what helps them feel confident.

Take a moment to notice

- What does your child choose to do when they have free time?
- When do they seem most curious or interested?
- What makes them smile, concentrate or want to try again?
- How do they show you something they've discovered?

There are no right or wrong answers. Just little things worth noticing.



A quiet reflection

Something I've noticed about my child...
Something I'd like to explore with them...

You don't need to know everything about how your child learns. Being curious about their world is a wonderful place to begin.

SECTION 2

Communication Comes in Many Forms



It's all about expression.

When we think about communication, it's easy to focus on words. We listen for clear sentences, answers to questions and explanations.

But have you ever noticed how much children tell us without saying a word?

A child might show you something they've made, act out a story or draw a picture to explain an idea.
They're communicating, even when they're not talking.

It doesn't always start with words

Some children love talking. Others prefer to show, make, move or gesture. And sometimes a child who finds words difficult has wonderful ideas they simply need another way to share.

Communication isn't only about the words we hear. It's about the meaning a child is trying to share.



These are all ways of saying:

This is what I understand. This is how I think.

SECTION 2

Showing What You Know

There is more than one way to share an idea.

Have you ever asked your child a question and received a completely unexpected response? Perhaps they couldn't find the words, but they could show you exactly what they meant. Children have so many ways of sharing their thoughts, ideas and discoveries.

Point or Gesture

A movement, a look or a gesture can tell you what a child wants to share.



Draw It

Pictures, sketches and diagrams can help children express ideas that are difficult to explain.



Act It Out

Role play, movement and pretend play can bring thoughts and stories to life.



Build or Make It

A model, construction or creation can show what a child has imagined or understood.



Use Communication Tools

Symbols, signing, picture boards or communication devices can give children more ways to express themselves.



Record or Share It

A photograph, voice recording or short video can capture an idea without needing to write it down.



Every way of communicating deserves to be heard, seen and valued.

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SECTION 2

Seeing Communication Differently



Sometimes we just need to look a little closer.

Children have wonderful ways of sharing what's going on in their minds.

Sometimes it's through words. Other times it's a drawing, a gesture, a little creation or something they want to show you.

And sometimes they don't answer straight away. They might have so many ideas running around in their head that they need a little time to sort through them before they're ready to respond.

When we give children that time, and notice the little things they do, we begin to see just how much they're telling us.

Instead of looking only for...

- ✗ The correct answer
- ✗ Full sentences
- ✗ Neat written work
- ✗ An immediate response



Try noticing...

- ✓ The ideas behind their answer
- ✓ What they're showing you
- ✓ The meaning in their drawings or actions
- ✓ The time they need to think



Try asking differently

Changing the question can give children another way to share what they know.



A different response doesn't always mean a lack of understanding.

Sometimes it means we need to find another way to listen.

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SECTION 2

Listening to Your Child

Sometimes listening means giving someone time.

Have you noticed how children often choose the most unexpected moments to tell you something important?

It might be while you're cooking, walking together, sitting quietly, or just as you're paying for the shopping or in the middle of an important phone call!

Sometimes they choose these moments because talking feels easier when there's less attention on them. Other times, an idea has suddenly popped into their head and they want to share it before it disappears.

Of course, we can't always stop what we're doing. A smile, a gentle touch or a few reassuring words can let them know they've been heard.



> **"That sounds important. I want to hear about it. Can you give me a moment?"**

The important thing is to come back to them when you can, because knowing that you'll make time to listen helps them feel that what they have to say matters.

Little things that make a difference

Small ways to show you're listening, even when you can't stop right away.

Give them time

A pause doesn't always mean they have nothing to say. They may still be finding the words or organising their ideas.



Acknowledge them

A smile, a gentle touch or a few reassuring words let them know you've heard them, even if you can't stop immediately.



Come back to the conversation

Let them know when you'll be ready to listen, and try to keep that promise.



Help them capture the thought

If they're worried about forgetting, they could draw a quick picture, make a note or record a voice message until you're ready.



A quiet reflection

- When does your child seem most comfortable sharing their thoughts?
- Have you noticed times when they choose unexpected moments to talk?
- Is there a way you could help them remember their thoughts until you're ready to listen?

Something to remember

Being heard isn't always about speaking. It's about knowing someone is listening.

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SECTION 3

When Comparison Creeps In



Sometimes comparison makes us forget how well we're doing.

Have you ever been feeling quite happy with how your child is getting on, only to hear what someone else's child can do?

Perhaps they're already reading independently, writing wonderful stories or racing ahead with their maths.

And suddenly, that little voice begins:

“Should my child be doing that too?”
“Am I doing enough?”

It's so easy to start questioning ourselves, especially when we're surrounded by stories of other people's achievements.
But there's something worth remembering.

You're often comparing the little glimpse you see of someone else's life with everything you know about your own.

You see your child's struggles, their tired days, the things they find difficult and all the little steps that nobody else notices.

And you see their wonderful moments too.

Something to remember

Another child's progress doesn't take anything away from your own child's achievements.

Their journey is theirs. Your child's journey belongs to them.

SECTION 3

The Child Behind the Milestones

There's so much more to your child than a list of things they should be doing.

It's easy to get caught up in ages, stages and milestones.
But while we're wondering what our children should be achieving, we can sometimes overlook the wonderful things they're already doing.



Look a little closer

What you might see
A child taking longer than expected to master a new skill.

What you might not notice
The imagination, determination and problem-solving happening along the way.

What you can celebrate
Those small steps forward, the growing confidence and the pleasure of discovering something new.

Something to remember

A milestone can tell you something about a child's development. It doesn't tell you everything about the child.

And when a child needs extra help along the way, recognising their strengths can help us find the support that works for them.

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SECTION 3

Letting Go of the Timeline

Children don't all need to reach the same place at the same time.

Have you ever wondered whether your child should be doing something by now?
Perhaps you've heard what another child has achieved, or noticed that even two children in the same family approach things differently.
It's easy to feel there's a timetable everyone should be following.
But learning isn't quite so tidy.



Even in the same family

One child might enjoy reading, while another loves building and creating.

One might jump straight into something new, while another needs time to watch, think and build confidence.

Neither child's interests tell us everything about what they can do or what they might need help with.

They're growing into their own people, not following identical instructions.

Something worth remembering

Milestones can help us recognise when a child might need extra support. But they aren't a measure of a child's worth or potential.

We can celebrate progress without turning childhood into a race.

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SECTION 3

Finding Your Own Confidence

You know more about your child than you sometimes give yourself credit for.

Have you ever been enjoying a lovely day with your child when someone asks a question that makes you doubt yourself?

"What level are they working at?"
"Shouldn't they be doing that by now?"
"Are you sure they're learning enough?"

Sometimes people mean well. But even an innocent question can leave us wondering whether we're doing enough.
And it's easy to forget all the wonderful little things we've noticed along the way.



You don't have to explain everything
You know the conversations you've shared, the difficulties you've worked through and the little achievements that mean so much to your child.
And you don't have to justify every decision to everyone who asks.

Words You Can Use

Sometimes a simple, confident answer is enough.

"They're making progress in their own way."

"We're working on what they need right now."

"You should see how much they've learnt about something they love!"

"We're celebrating the progress they're making."

Something worth remembering

Confidence doesn't mean having all the answers. Sometimes it simply means trusting what you've seen, while being open to learning more.

SECTION 3

Look How Far You've Come

Sometimes we only realise how far we've travelled when we stop and look back.

It's easy to become so focused on what our children are learning next that we forget how much they've already achieved.
Then an old photograph, a drawing or a special memory reminds us of something they once found difficult.

And suddenly we realise just how far they've come.

My Own 'I Can' Moments

Goals can be useful. They give us something to work towards. But meaningful progress doesn't always need to be measured against a curriculum or checklist.
Sometimes the most meaningful achievements are the ones children recognise for themselves.

Perhaps your child might proudly say:



And sometimes the most wonderful words of all are:
"I couldn't do that before. But look at me now!"

A Scrapbook of Proud Moments

Why not keep a little collection of memories together? Add photographs, drawings or notes showing how something began and how it turned out.

Let your child decide what belongs in their scrapbook. Their proudest moment might not be the one you expected!

And remember, progress doesn't always mean doing something independently. Asking for help, using a supportive tool or knowing when to take a break can be worth celebrating too.

A Thought to Take With You

Don't just look at how far there is to go. Take a moment to see how far you've already come.

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SECTION 4

The Courage to Say "I Don't Know"

Sometimes confidence begins with honesty.

We often think confidence looks like knowing the answer, getting things right or feeling ready to join in straight away.

But for many children, some of the bravest words they can say are:

"I don't know."

"I need help."

"I'm not ready yet."



In a world where children are often expected to get things right, those words can feel hard to say. A child may worry about making mistakes, falling behind or disappointing someone. That is why these moments matter so much.

When a child feels safe enough to be honest, they are showing us something important. They are trusting us with how they feel.

Quiet signs of confidence



Saying "I don't know"

This can be the beginning of real learning. A child who admits they are unsure is giving themselves space to ask, explore and understand.



Asking for help

Needing help is not a weakness. It is often a sign that a child is beginning to recognise what they need. It shows they trust you enough to let you know.



Saying "I'm not ready yet"

Sometimes children need a little more time to think, watch or build confidence before they begin. Taking a break or saying "not yet" can be a positive and healthy choice.

A Thought to Remember

Confidence isn't always about having the answer.
Sometimes it's about feeling safe enough to say what you need.

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SECTION 4

When Getting It Wrong Feels Frightening

Mistakes can feel big, especially when we want to get things right.



For some children, the thought of making a mistake can feel overwhelming. They may go quiet, become upset or stop what they are doing. It can look like they're giving up, but often they're worried about getting something wrong.

In a world where children are often told to 'get this right', some begin to believe that mistakes mean they're not good enough. This can make it hard to keep trying, even when they really want to.

It's not like I imagined

ART

A child may have a wonderful picture in their head, but find it hard to create exactly what they imagine.

If it doesn't look the way they hoped, they might scribble it out or stop, even though they have brilliant ideas and a wild imagination.

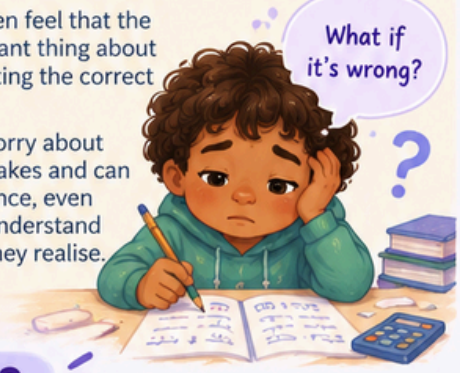


I must get the right answer

MATHS

Some children feel that the most important thing about maths is getting the correct answer.

They may worry about making mistakes and can lose confidence, even when they understand more than they realise.



What can help?

Take the pressure away

Let them know it's okay not to get it right the first time. Mistakes are a normal part of learning.



Offer a choice

If an activity feels too hard, give them the option to take a break, try a different approach or come back later. This can help them feel safe and in control.



Notice the effort, not just the result

Praise their ideas, their perseverance and their willingness to try, even if it doesn't go as planned. This helps them see that learning is about exploring, not just getting it right.



A Thought to Remember

Mistakes are not the end of learning.
They are part of the journey.
Children build confidence when they discover it's safe to try, to get it wrong, and to have another go.

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SECTION 4

Let Them Be the Expert



Sometimes the most powerful thing we can do is let our children teach us.

As parents, we're so used to being the ones who explain things, answer questions and show our children what to do.

But what happens when we turn things around?

Your child might know everything about dinosaurs, can explain the rules of a game, has discovered something fascinating about space or knows far more about a film or a computer game than you do.

Why not let them be the expert for a while?

It's okay not to know

You don't have to understand everything your child is interested in. And you certainly don't have to pretend you do!

Try saying:

"I don't know much about that. Can you show me?"

"How did you work that out?"

"Would you teach me how to do it?"

Give them the lead

Let your child choose what to show you and how to explain it. Listen, ask questions and enjoy discovering something together.

They might demonstrate, draw, build, play a game, tell you about a film, show you a favourite app or share something they've created.

You might be surprised by how much they know — and they might be surprised by how much you value their knowledge.



Enjoy their interests

Letting your child be the expert can open the door to wonderful conversations.

- Who's that actor? I recognise him, but I can't remember his name.
- Can you tell me more about this game?
- What happens next in your story?
- How do you build that in Minecraft?
- What do you know about dinosaurs?
- Can you show me how that works?



Remember they may find working with others tricky

Some children, especially autistic children, may find it hard to share their knowledge or work together at times. They might prefer to show you in their own way, or on their own terms.

That's okay. Letting them be the expert doesn't mean they have to teach in a certain way. We can still show interest, ask gentle questions and enjoy what they share, even if it's for a short time or in their own style.



A Thought to Remember

Sometimes the greatest gift we can give a child isn't another answer. It's a question we genuinely want them to answer.

You don't become less capable by admitting your child knows something you don't. You become someone they can share their world with.

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SECTION 4

Words That Help Confidence Grow

Sometimes a few gentle words can make all the difference.

Children listen to more than what we say. They notice how we respond when something goes wrong, when they ask for help or when they're excited to show us something.

We don't need to praise everything they do. What matters most is that they feel heard, respected and valued.



Little words that make a difference

When they're unsure



"It's okay not to know yet. Shall we find out together?"

When something goes wrong



"That didn't turn out how you hoped. What would you like to do next?"

When they share an idea



"Tell me more. I'd love to hear what you're thinking."

When they're proud



"You look really pleased with what you've done!"

When they need help



"Of course I'll help. Which part shall we look at together?"

When they're not ready



"That's okay. We can take our time."

It's not always about praise

Children don't need to hear "Well done!" after everything they do. Over-praising can become meaningless and children often notice when we're not really paying attention.

Sometimes they simply want us to notice what they've created, listen to their ideas or share their excitement. And sometimes they need a little guidance to help them take their idea further.

Helpful suggestions can open the next step

Offering a gentle suggestion doesn't mean we're criticising the child. We're showing an interest in their thinking and helping them discover what they might try next.

You might say:

- "That's an interesting idea. Have you thought about trying it this way?"
- "What do you think you could do differently next time?"
- "Can we look at this part together?"
- "I love what you've done. How could we make it even better?"

And if they're not ready for suggestions, we can leave them for another time.

A Thought to Remember

Confidence grows when children feel heard, respected and valued — not just when they get things right.

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SECTION 5

Make Learning Visual

Sometimes seeing something makes it easier to understand.



Have you ever tried explaining something to your child, only to find that a picture, an object or a quick demonstration makes everything clearer?
Sometimes words alone just aren't enough.
And that's perfectly okay.

There are so many ways to show an idea

Draw it
A simple sketch, diagram or picture can help make an idea easier to follow.

Use real things
Buttons, toys, kitchen utensils or everyday objects can help children explore an idea for themselves.

Show the steps
Photographs, picture cards or a simple sequence can make an activity easier to understand and remember.

Make it together
Building a model, arranging objects or creating something gives children a chance to see how things work.

Let's Make It Visual!

Imagine you're making a bird box together.
You could draw a little picture of what you're going to make, lay out the pieces in the order you'll need them, or show your child how two pieces fit together.
Then let them have a go, with whatever help they need.
Sometimes seeing it, touching it and trying it makes more sense than a hundred explanations.

See it Try it Discover it

A Thought to Take With You

Sometimes showing is more helpful than explaining. And sometimes doing it together makes all the difference.

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SECTION 5

Talk Is Learning Too



Some of the best learning begins with a simple conversation.

Have you ever noticed how a little chat can turn into something wonderful?

Perhaps your child asks why the moon follows the car, wonders how birds know where to fly, or starts telling you all about their favourite game.
You don't need to have all the answers. Sometimes wondering together is where the learning begins.

Little conversations, big discoveries

Talk as you go

Chat about what you're doing together. Cooking, shopping or walking to the park can all lead to interesting discoveries.

Wonder together

Try saying, "I wonder why that happens?" or "What do you think might happen next?"

Share stories

Tell family stories, make up silly adventures or remember something funny that happened. Stories help children explore ideas, memories and language.

Let them explain

When your child wants to tell you about something they love, give them the chance to lead. You might discover something new yourself!

Try this in everyday life

Imagine you're making dinner together.
Your child asks, "Why does pasta go soft when we cook it?"

You could give them the answer straight away.
Or you could wonder together, look at the pasta before and after cooking, and talk about what has changed.

One little question has become a shared discovery.

You don't need to turn every conversation into a lesson.
Sometimes the conversation itself is the learning.

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SECTION 5

Learning Through Doing



Sometimes the best way to understand something is to have a go.

Have you ever watched a child become completely absorbed in what they're doing?

Perhaps they're making a cake, building a den, planting seeds or trying to work out why something isn't working.
They might make a mess, change their minds or start all over again.
And that's part of the discovery!

It's the doing that matters

Trying things out
Children discover what works, what doesn't and what they might try differently next time.

Making mistakes
When something doesn't go as planned, there's an opportunity to explore why. Not every mistake needs correcting straight away.

Finding their own solutions
Sometimes it's tempting to step in and show a child how something should be done. But giving them a little time to experiment can lead to discoveries neither of you expected!

Getting involved
Cooking, gardening, repairing, creating and helping with everyday jobs can all become opportunities to learn new skills.

Give them a chance to discover

Imagine you're making a cake together.
Your child wonders what would happen if you added more flour.
Rather than immediately giving them the answer, perhaps you could try a tiny experiment with a little mixture.
What changed? How does it feel? What might you do differently?
You haven't delivered a lesson. You've shared a discovery.

Something worth remembering

Give children something to do. Let the doing reveal the learning.
They don't always need to know they're learning. Sometimes they just need the freedom to explore.

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SECTION 5

When Writing Is Needed

Wonderful ideas don't always arrive in neat handwriting.

Have you ever listened to your child explain something beautifully, only to find that getting those ideas onto paper is a completely different story?

Perhaps their handwriting is difficult to read. Maybe writing takes so much effort that they've forgotten what they wanted to say.



It's easy to worry, especially when we're used to seeing neat written work as a sign of progress.

But handwriting and understanding are not the same thing.

Look Beyond the Handwriting

The ideas matter

A page full of crossings-out, drawings and unfinished sentences may contain wonderful imagination and understanding.

Writing takes practice

Forming letters, spelling words and organising thoughts are different skills. Some children need more time, support or alternative tools.

Let the ideas come first

Children can tell you their stories, draw pictures, type, use speech-to-text or ask someone to write for them.

Build skills gently

Handwriting can still be practised in small, manageable steps without making it a barrier to sharing ideas.

Your role isn't always to provide the answers or make everything look right. Sometimes it's to guide, encourage and help your child discover what works for them.
A child may need you to demonstrate something, explain it differently or offer a little support.
And sometimes they need you to step back and let their ideas take shape, even when the result isn't quite what either of you expected.

A Thought to Take With You

Never let the struggle to hold a pencil silence the story a child wants to tell.

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SECTION 5

Recording Ideas Your Own Way

There is more than one way to capture a wonderful idea.



Have you ever watched your child build something, invent a story or explain an idea, and realised how much thinking is going on?
Not all of that learning needs to end up in an exercise book.
Sometimes a drawing, a photograph, a voice recording or a few marks on paper can tell us just as much.

The important thing is giving children a way to express and remember their ideas.

Different Ways to Record Learning

Make Your Mark
Scribbles, sketches, symbols, diagrams and mind maps can all help children explore and organise their thoughts. They don't have to look perfect to have meaning.

Use Technology
Typing, speech-to-text, photographs and video recordings can help children capture ideas without relying entirely on handwriting.

Talk It Through
Children can dictate a story, explain an idea while someone writes it down, or make a voice recording to listen to later.

Find What Works
Communication boards, symbols, adapted keyboards and other aids can give children different ways to communicate and record what they know.

Try Looking at It Differently

Imagine your child builds a wonderful model.
Instead of asking them to write about it, perhaps they could photograph the different stages, record themselves explaining how they built it, or draw a simple diagram.
They've still recorded their learning. They've simply chosen another way.

An idea doesn't become less valuable because it wasn't written down.
The important thing isn't always how an idea is recorded. It's that the child has a way to share it.

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SECTION 5

Exploring Their Interests

Sometimes the best learning begins with something they already love.



Have you ever noticed how much your child can remember about something that really interests them?
Perhaps they know everything about dinosaurs, spend hours creating Minecraft worlds, love cooking, or can explain every detail of their favourite story.
They might struggle to remember something they've been asked to learn, yet happily spend ages exploring a subject they've chosen themselves.

Their interests can give us a wonderful starting point for learning.

Follow Their Curiosity

Notice What Excites Them

Listen to what they talk about, what they return to and what makes them curious. These are little clues about where learning might begin.

Join Their World

Let them show you something they enjoy. Ask questions, listen and sometimes allow them to become the expert.

Explore Together

An interest in dinosaurs might lead to measuring footprints. Cooking could lead to experimenting with ingredients. A favourite game might inspire maps, stories or problem-solving.

Let It Grow Naturally

You don't have to turn every interest into a lesson. Sometimes simply giving children time and space to explore is enough.

Let Them Lead Sometimes

Imagine your child has spent an afternoon building a Minecraft village.
You could ask them to give you a tour. They might explain how they planned the buildings, solved problems or decided where everything should go.
You may discover they've been exploring design, language, mathematics and creative thinking without anyone setting them a task.
And sometimes? Just enjoy the tour together.

A Thought to Take With You

You don't always have to lead children towards learning. Sometimes you can follow them and discover where it takes you.

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SECTION 6

Learning Doesn't Always Look Like Learning



Sometimes the most important learning happens when nobody is looking for it.

Have you ever watched your child do something and suddenly realised how much they actually know?

Perhaps they are explaining the rules of a game, helping someone solve a problem, building something complicated or remembering details from a favourite story.

You might not have taught them any of it directly.

And yet, there it is – learning, understanding and growing confidence, right in front of you.

Not everything a child learns comes with a worksheet or a finished piece of work.

Look a Little Closer



Watch What They Do

A child building a tower may be exploring balance, planning and problem-solving. Someone organising a game may be using memory, communication and negotiation.



Listen to Their Explanations

Children often reveal what they understand when they're talking about something they enjoy, rather than answering a question they've been asked.



Notice How They Solve Problems

Trying a different way, asking for help or adapting an idea can tell us as much about learning as getting the answer right.



Remember That Learning Can Be Quiet

Some children prefer to observe, listen or think things through before joining in. Being quiet doesn't mean nothing is happening.

A Thought to Take With You

Learning does not always announce itself.
Sometimes we notice it best when we stop looking only for finished work.

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SECTION 6

Learning in Everyday Life



Children are learning far more often than we sometimes realise.

So much learning happens in ordinary family life.

It can appear while putting **shopping away, helping with dinner, organising** a game, feeding a pet or working out how to fix something that has **gone wrong.** These moments may not **look** like lessons, but they are full of thinking.

A Little Moment of Discovery



Imagine your child is helping you put away the shopping.

They notice that the frozen food needs to go away first.
They remember where things belong.
They put the heavy tins on a lower shelf.
They tell you that you are nearly out of something you use often.

Nobody set a task.
Nobody asked them to prove what they knew.
They were simply getting involved – and showing memory, organisation, decision-making and understanding.

Everyday Learning Might Look Like...

- noticing what comes first and what comes next
- remembering where things belong
- solving small problems
- helping to make decisions
- explaining how something works
- joining in with family routines

A Thought to Take With You

**Before asking, "What did my child learn today?"
try asking, "What did I see them notice, practise or understand?"
You may discover that learning has been there all along.**

SECTION 6

Show Me What You Know

Sometimes showing is easier than explaining.



Have you ever asked your child a question and received a shrug, an uncertain answer or simply, "I don't know"?

Yet later, you watch them doing something and realise they understood far more than they could explain.

Sometimes children find it easier to show what they know than to put it into words.

Understanding doesn't always appear when we ask for it.

Give Them a Chance to Show You



Let Them Demonstrate

Instead of asking how something works, invite your child to show you. They might demonstrate a game, build a model or show you how to use something.



Make Room for Different Responses

Some children explain through actions, gestures, drawings, communication aids or by choosing between options.



Offer a Little Support

A reminder, a visual clue or a demonstration might help your child remember what to do next. Support doesn't make their effort less valuable.



Watch Without Interrupting

Sometimes we discover more when we allow children time to work things out without rushing in with questions or corrections.

A Little Moment of Discovery

Imagine your child has been learning how to measure ingredients.

Ask them how many millilitres are in half a litre, and they may struggle to remember.

But give them a measuring jug and ask them to pour half a litre of water, and they might find the correct mark straight away.

They've demonstrated something they understand, even if recalling the answer in words is difficult.



A Thought to Take With You

Don't judge what a child knows only by what they can tell you.
Give them opportunities to show you, too.

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SECTION 6

When They Know More Than They Can Explain

Knowing something and remembering it at the right moment aren't always the same thing.



Have you ever watched your child do something confidently one day, only to struggle with the very same thing the next?

It's natural to wonder whether they've really understood it.

But remembering information, finding the right words and using a skill when asked can all make different demands on a child.

A difficult moment doesn't erase what they've already learned.

What Might Help?



Give Them Thinking Time

A little silence can give children space to find their thoughts without feeling rushed.



Offer a Familiar Clue

An object, picture, example or gentle reminder might help them make the connection.



Change the Situation

Something difficult to recall when questioned may become easier during a familiar activity or in a different setting.



Notice the Circumstances

Tiredness, anxiety, distractions and pressure can affect how easily a child shows what they know.

A Little Moment of Discovery

Perhaps your child remembers the rules of a favourite game when they're playing, but struggles to explain them when someone asks.

Rather than repeating the question, try joining the game.

Watch what they do. Give them time. Let the situation help them remember.

You may see understanding that wasn't obvious a few minutes earlier.



A Thought to Take With You

Learning isn't always available on demand.
A child may need time, encouragement or the right opportunity to show what they know.

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SECTION 6

Notice the Small Discoveries

Progress doesn't always arrive in big, obvious moments.

Sometimes progress is so small that we almost miss it.

A child who usually asks for help tries something independently.

Someone who struggled with an activity yesterday decides to have another go.

A child remembers something they couldn't recall last week, or finds a different way to solve a problem.

These moments may seem ordinary, but they can tell us something important about how learning is developing.

Progress is not always about doing something perfectly. Sometimes it's about being willing to try.



Look for the Little Changes



Trying Again

Returning to something difficult can show growing confidence, even when the result hasn't changed.



Finding Another Way

A child who changes their approach may be developing flexibility and problem-solving skills.



Growing Independence

Doing one small part of an activity without help can be meaningful progress.



Making Connections

Recognising something familiar or using an idea in a new situation can show learning beginning to take hold.

Give Progress Time

Children don't always show what they've learned consistently.
Something they manage today may be difficult tomorrow. That doesn't mean the earlier achievement wasn't real.

Notice these moments as they happen. If it helps, make a little note, take a photograph or simply remember what you saw.

Over time, you may begin to notice patterns and changes that aren't obvious from one day to the next.



A Thought to Take With You

You don't have to measure every moment of learning.
Sometimes it's enough to notice, appreciate and give it room to grow.

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SECTION 7

You Know Your Child Best

Sometimes the most important knowledge is the knowledge you already hold.



You see the little things. The look that tells you your child is overwhelmed. The excitement they can't quite put into words. The moments when they're ready to try, and those when they need a little more time.

You notice their interests, their worries, their patterns and what helps them. You understand their strengths and the things that are more difficult. This day-to-day knowledge is incredibly valuable.

You know your child in ways others may not.
Your observations, experiences and insight matter

Your Knowledge Makes a Difference



You notice what others miss

You see the small changes, the tiny successes and the things that might worry your child before they say a word.



You understand their unique needs

You know what helps them feel safe, motivated and ready to learn. You know which situations are more challenging.



Your observations matter

The information you share with teachers and professionals can help them understand your child more fully.



You bring a bigger picture

You see how things fit together across different places and situations – at home, in the community and in everyday life.

Working Together

Teachers, therapists and other professionals can offer valuable support, advice and additional perspectives.

You and professionals bring different pieces of the puzzle. When your knowledge and their expertise are shared and respected, your child is more likely to get the support they need.

It's okay to ask questions, share your views and speak up if something doesn't feel right. You know your child, and your voice matters.

Trust What You See

Your experiences, your instincts and your feelings are important. They can guide you, even when things are uncertain.

You may not always have the answers, but your understanding of your child is a powerful starting point.



A Thought to Take With You

You know your child in a way that no one else does.
Your knowledge, your insight and your voice matter.

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SECTION 7

You Don't Have to Do It All



You don't have to be perfect.
You just have to be you.

It's easy to feel that you should be doing more. More learning, more activities, more support, more of everything.

But children don't need you to recreate school at home, or to respond to every moment brilliantly. They need you to be there, to notice them, to understand them and to keep going, even on the hard days.

Presence matters more than perfection.

Let Go of Unhelpful Pressures



You don't have to do everything

You don't need a perfect plan or a full schedule. It's okay to focus on what works for your child and your family.



You can change course

Some days will look different from others. It's okay to adapt, try a different approach or take a break when something isn't working.



Small steps are enough

You don't have to see big results every day. Little steps, repeated over time, can lead to meaningful progress.



You are doing your best

Surviving the day when things are difficult is a success. Your effort, your care and your willingness to keep going matter.



Be Kind to Yourself

There will be days when you feel tired, overwhelmed or unsure. That's normal.

Supporting a child's learning and wellbeing can sometimes feel demanding, especially when they need additional support. It's okay to acknowledge that some days are difficult Try to speak to yourself with the same kindness and understanding that you offer to your child.

Rest
Breathe
Be Kind
You're Enough

A Thought to Take With You

You don't have to do more. You don't have to be perfect.
You just have to be you, and that is enough.

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SECTION 7

Small Things Matter

Everyday moments can make a big difference. ♡



Learning doesn't just happen in formal activities. It happens in the everyday moments of family life – in conversations, shared experiences and the chance to try, explore and be together.

The small things you do, often without even realising, can build confidence, curiosity and important life skills.

Everyday Moments Can Help Your Child...

Build communication
Through everyday chats, shared interests and listening.

Spark curiosity
By exploring the world around them and following their interests.

Develop confidence
By being encouraged to try, make mistakes and have another go.

Learn life skills
Through practical experiences in real situations.

Look for Learning in the Everyday

It might be helping to cook a meal, looking after a pet, noticing changes in nature, or chatting on a car journey. These moments can all support learning in ways that feel natural and meaningful.



Take Time to Notice

When you slow down and notice what's happening, you may see new skills developing, growing confidence or a deeper understanding.

These ordinary moments matter. They are part of the bigger picture.



A Thought to Take With You

The small things you do each day can make a big difference. ♡

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SECTION 7

Trust Yourself Too

You've got this.

You've read about how children learn, how they communicate and how to support them in everyday life.

But it's just as important to recognise the care, effort and understanding you bring.

You know your child. You see the world through their eyes. You notice the small things that matter. You listen, you adapt and you keep going, even when things are difficult.

Your understanding, your instinct and your love make a real difference.

A Few Gentle Reminders

You don't have to be perfect.
Children need a real person, not a perfect one.

You don't have to do it all.
It's okay to focus on what works for your child and your family.

You can trust what you see.
Your knowledge of your child matters.

You can ask for support.
It's a sign of strength, not weakness.

You are making a difference.
The care, time and understanding you offer really do matter.

Every child's journey is unique.

There will be ups and downs, twists and turns, and moments when you feel uncertain.

But you are not alone, and you are doing better than you think.



A Final Thought For You

Trust what you see. Trust what you feel.
Trust the relationship you are building.
Most of all, trust yourself too.

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