



How can I help my child to learn another language?

Is your child learning a language you yourself cannot speak? Do you ever feel that you would like to help, but there is nothing you can do?

At John Paul College, the staff welcome and encourage the efforts of parents in the education process. We recognize the difficulties that parents sometimes face as co-educators, either in terms of time or subject knowledge. Be assured that every effort you make is greatly appreciated, and you can easily contribute to your child's learning of an additional language by implementing one or more of the suggestions outlined below:

- Check to see that your child has all the equipment he/ she needs packed ready for the next day. Language students need an exercise book, pens and laptop for every lesson.
- Encourage your child to review classwork by asking him/her what s/he learned in class that day. Not only will this show you value your child's learning, it will give him/her a chance to process that day's lesson objectives. Have your child to teach you a few new words or phrases. Everyone learns best by doing, and the extra practice will be of great benefit. You might learn something too!
- Support your child by listening to him/her recite poems, read passages, practise dialogues etc. Even if you are not able to correct the pronunciation, your interest will be demonstrated and noted by your child. This is very motivational!
- Ask to see your child's books / computer notes. Encourage him/her to maintain neat and tidy bookwork. Many spelling, script and punctuation errors are the result of poor handwriting or presentation.
- Confirm that your child has completed his/her homework tasks. Language students regularly receive homework, and this revision is an important part of the learning process, allowing them to consolidate new information and practise new skills.
- Urge your child to attempt tasks, even if he/she is having difficulty. Remind him/her that homework tasks are about practising vocabulary and skills learned in class.
- Encourage him/her to review classwork and handouts for pointers. Help him/her to look for the information needed.
- Remind students who want to extend their classroom knowledge to use teacher recommended resources and not use the internet to solve every problem. Discourage the use of online translators – they really don't work well and don't help students learn.
- If your child experiences difficulty completing homework tasks, or expresses concern with regard to his/her competence in some area, encourage him/her to attend tutorials. If the times offered are not suitable, ask your child to arrange for a more suitable time. Check to see that this has been done via email or call the teacher at school.



- Emphasise the benefits of daily revision in addition to homework. Even only five minutes of concentrated effort per day can help to promote long-term learning and minimize the stress of last minute cramming sessions before tests.
- Assist your child to exploit his/her own learning preferences during revision at home by encouraging him/her to make posters, use flashcards to learn new vocabulary, or record words to aid learning and improve pronunciation.
- Encourage your child to use the language when speaking to overseas visitors or other language students. Host an exchange student, or support your child's efforts to participate in one of the many exchange programs or tours offered through our College.
- Record any relevant programs or films for your child. SBS television has many foreign language films and programs, including the news, which can help to improve students' vocabulary and comprehension - especially with the option of rewinding and replaying key points. Other stations also run documentaries, which often provide interesting and important cultural information. The Internet also gives access to current language-specific television and radio programs. Don't forget public events such as the annual German Film Festival.
- Promote reading in the new language. Subscribe to a foreign magazine or newspaper, arrange for a penpal, visit your local library. Many municipal libraries now contain a section of books / magazines in languages other than English. Don't forget many non-English newspapers and books are also published in Australia. The Internet brings world publications to your door! If you lack access at home, encourage your child to use the facilities provided at school.
- Foster the use of online programs and apps available to practise language learning outside the classroom. Many of these are free and the greater exposure to the target language they allow can be extremely beneficial.
- Applaud participation in competitions such as Education Perfect and Assessment of Language Competence to build your child's confidence, and give him/her additional opportunities to use the target language.
- Praise your child's efforts! Like anything new, learning another language can sometimes be frustrating and learners can easily lose confidence. Remind your child that s/he didn't learn his/her first language overnight, so a second or third language will be no different. Everybody makes mistakes, but the biggest mistake of all is giving up!

With many thanks for your support and participation in the language learning process!

The Modern Languages Department

All I can be

