

Golden Rules

- DO 'little and often!' Counting sultanas as you eat them or stairs when going up to a first floor flat is a much better way of rehearsing counting than sitting over a workbook.
- DON'T push a skill, especially if a child is becoming confused or is feeling pressured. It always pays to talk to the teacher if you feel your child is not understanding something, rather than confuse them further by teaching them in a different way.
- DO give LOTS of praise. Resist the temptation to say, 'but' or to point out mistakes every time. Children need encouragement and positive reinforcement to be confident, and a confident child makes a better learner.
- DON'T force workbooks on your child. They will do plenty of writing in their maths books at school. At home, you have the opportunity to help them memorise their number facts and perform mathematical calculations in their heads.
- DO play games! Dice, dominoes, track games and cards all make excellent excuses for using and applying our number skills. And at the same time your child is learning the important skills of losing with grace and winning with style!
- DON'T stress written sums laid out as you used to do them! Nowadays it is the development of what we call 'numerical fluency' that counts. Children need to be comfortable with numbers, to understand how they work and to be confident in doing mental calculations.
- DO remember that your focussed attention is a far more important and pleasurable commodity for any child than any amount of TV or video game activity. Every child wants to be doing things one-on-one with someone they love and trust.