

Methods of Teaching and Learning Styles

As a home educator you can choose the best aspects of any learning approach to create a curriculum that meets the needs of your child and family. There are different ways in which people learn and three styles are commonly identified:

- Visual – to see things written down, through diagrams or pictures;
- Auditory – through hearing and listening to words, rhythm and music;
- Kinaesthetic – being physically involved by music, touch or practical experimentation.

Methods of teaching can also vary:

- A direct approach, working alongside your child, teaching by instruction;
- Coaching whereby you demonstrate and give advice on possible methods of completing a given task;
- Autonomous learning where once the task is set the child works with support where needed.

With experience you will identify which combinations of these approaches work best.

Whatever approach is taken you do not have to work to a structured timetable unless you wish to do so. However, some families prefer an element of structure with for example, formal work in the morning and more flexibility in the afternoons. This is particularly useful initially, when your child begins home education. as it offers a sense of stability and familiar routine. Learning can of course occur anytime, anywhere and in many ways. You could follow individual subjects; combine subjects into projects or follow an area of interest or expertise.

Families often feel that whatever style they use, it is always important to recognise the need to emphasise the continual development of skills in literacy and numeracy.

You may find it useful to keep a diary to record preparation and completion of work. A reading record is particularly useful.

A good curriculum also includes opportunities to develop social skills. Often, the local community offers activities, courses, workshops, clubs and societies etc that may be of interest.