Using Technology in your Home-School Link.
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Part 4 of a series of 12 of Macmillan’s Home-School Link

PART 1

Top 5 ways of communicating using technology:

1. **Get social!** Use social media to communicate with parents: start discussions, get feedback and get interactive. Consider tweeting achievements and news or posting them in a school group on a social network.

2. **Start a class or school blog.** This is a great way for teachers to display and share work or class videos and for parents to comment. Why not ask parents to author some blog posts to show you value their views and opinions?

3. **Set up a text-messaging system.** Make sure parents always get news by setting up and using a text messaging system – send alerts to parents including ‘Happy Holidays’!

4. **Set up a private area for parents on your school website.** Are you using your school website to communicate with parents? Set up a private area for parents where they can login and view news about their child’s class and progress.

5. **Don’t forget about the telephone!** Calling parents with good news shows a personal interest in the development of their child.

Other ways technology can help:

1. When you send emails to parents, create a group in your contacts list so you can easily send an email to all the parents at the same time. (Make sure you enter the group in the ‘bcc’ line so that parents can’t see each other’s email addresses.) This is really useful for sending information about the syllabus, homework, trips, work for the holidays, school events etc.

2. You could request a read receipt with your email so that you can see when a parent has read an email.

3. Don’t forget, if you are ever unsure about how to do something technical, the internet usually has the answer! Look it up in an internet search engine and there is sure to be someone else who has encountered the same problem!

4. If your English course has digital student books, practice kits, eBooks or apps, make use of them in the classroom to encourage learning at home.
PART 2

Technology: From the classroom to the home...

Today’s students are often required to be digitally literate so it’s important to make technology an integral part of the learning process. If you embrace technology, there are many benefits. Technology helps:

- make learning more fun
- prepare students for the future
- students retain information
- students learn at their own pace
- engage parents in their child’s learning.

Why use technology at home?

Parents can help their child to get the most out of the digital components in their language course in the following ways:

- review target language with their child by looking carefully at presentation language together
- practise target language using audio by listening and repeating what they hear
- sing songs at home to reinforce vocabulary and sentence structure
- use vocabulary and presentation language to play simple games

Macmillan’s digital courses

Macmillan courses have the added benefit of technology that can be used in the classroom or at home in the form of apps, student practice kits, digital student books and eBooks. These will help students get ahead of the game and prepare for their next steps in life.

They work on a range of devices from phones and tablets to laptops and PCs. Some of their features include:

1. Integrated audio to help pronunciation - available in most digital components.
2. Mark-up tools that enable children to do activities at home with parents, make notes or write on the digital pages.
3. Music is one of the best ways to learn vocabulary and all course songs are included in student practice kits.
4. Interactive activities in practice kits and digital student books create exciting learning opportunities.

Macmillan Apps

Macmillan’s free apps are easy to install and navigate. The games are motivating and engaging, and are a great way for children to share their learning at home with parents whilst practising and consolidating their English skills.

Visit http://www.macmillaneducationapps.com for more information and instructions on how to download.

Home-School Link

Find the rest of Macmillan’s Home-School Link articles, quizzes and top tips at: www.macmillanyounglearners.com/home-school-link.