

Key Stage 2 Timetabling

Introduction

Subject Mix

The typical subject mix for Key Stage 2 is broadly similar from years 3 - 6. As your child progresses through these years, clearly the complexity and focus in each subject should develop accordingly.

So what subjects, and how many lessons per subject?

Let's say each learning day will be 5 working hours (plus morning break and lunchtime), then this equates to 25 hours per week. Here is how a typical week might break down into hours per subject (notice I haven't said lessons per subject yet!):

Subject	Hours per week
Mathematics	4
English	4
Science	3
Humanities	3
Languages	2
Computing	2
Technologies	2
Creative/Expressive Arts	3
PE/Sport	2

What do some of those subjects mean?

- The first three are clear enough.
- Humanities: This can include Geography, History, Religious Education (RE). Could typically be 1x Geography, 1x History, 1x RE; or 2x Geography and 1x History (depending on your view towards RE).
- Languages – At Key Stage 2 you are not restricted to Modern Languages (typically French, German, Spanish...) but you could also choose to deliver Ancient Greek, Latin, or a language specific to your religious beliefs, so Hebrew or Arabic, for example.
- Technologies: includes Design Technology, Food Technology, Textiles Technology, Electronics – can cover several by doing a different one each week or fortnight.
- Creative/Expressive Arts: to include Fine Art (drawing, painting, working with clay, etc), Music and Drama. Music can include music technology.

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The Timetable

It is usual to have a short(ish) break in the morning, say after two hours, and a longer break for lunch, perhaps after another hour and a half, with the remaining hour and a half after lunch. An alternative might be to split the morning into two hour-and-a-half sessions, with 2 hours in the afternoon.

Early Morning:

For the morning sessions, when I would suggest tackling most of the “heavy stuff” (English, Maths, and the more pen-and-paper subjects), breaking the sessions into “chunks” of 40 minutes or even 30 minutes might work well.

If you’ve already looked at my timetabling examples for KS3 and KS4, you’ll see that 1-hour lessons are often the norm. At KS2, your child may not have the attention span to cope with an hour of maths or English, and may reach “information overload” in less than an hour in many other subjects. This is especially true in Years 3 and 4.

So, Start with, say 30 or 40 minutes of maths or English – a few minutes “breather” (chance to grab a glass of water, take a bathroom break), 30 or 40 minutes of reading, another few moment’s “breather” then 30 or 40 minutes English or Maths (whichever didn’t happen earlier).

Break

After 3 sessions allow 20 minutes of break - snack, glass of water or fruit juice (try to avoid heavily sugary (or worse caffeinated) fizzy drinks – they don’t help with concentration!) – Some fresh fruit is a great idea – and some exercise – outside if possible and if the weather allows. Even a few minutes of fresh air and exercise makes a big difference.

After Break

Perhaps hit some of the History and Geography stuff, and possibly some sciences between break and Lunch.

Lunch

Try to make this nutritious, energising, but not so filling your child(ren) want(s) to sleep for the afternoon! Again, with a bit of a break to let food settle, some fresh air and exercise (weather permitting) is good before the afternoon session.

Afternoon

This leaves the afternoon for some longer lessons for Creative Art, Design and Technology, Music, P.E., possibly a science practical – where your child might enjoy a bit more time for these subjects, and where they might also be able to stay focused for longer.

Computing can fit into either the later morning area, or afternoon, depending on your child’s interest. Double lessons can be useful here – half the session to explain and understand a new concept, and the second half to apply it to a practical solution or part of a project.

You may want to schedule either the time between break and lunch, or the afternoon session for science, which could include some study of plants and other life in the garden, or looking at some other aspects of science indoors.

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Hints:

- It's easiest to work along the subject breakdown table, and put in all the lessons for one subject, then the next.
- Bear in mind your son/daughter's mind is likely to be "freshest" at the start of the morning, or after the morning break, so it's a good idea to use those for some of the more demanding subjects, or things s/he struggles with a bit.
- Break Maths into 30 or 40 minute slots, and spread them so there is at least one somewhere every morning, with two (but not together) on other morning(s).
- Try to split English in the same way. Also try to make two of the English lessons focused on reading (3 lessons if you're working in 30-minute slots), with the rest concentrating on creative writing and written comprehension. During the reading sessions, have your child(ren) read stories and other things from books, then discuss with him/her/them what they have just read, and make sure they are really understanding what they read.
- Some of the times for Technologies could well be put together as a whole afternoon slot. These are subjects where even fairly young children can really get engrossed for a couple of hours. Experiment and see what works (or doesn't!) for your son or daughter.
- I suggest putting the more creative and "fun" subjects later in the day – these may often be the subjects the child enjoys more, and the thought of them can be used as an incentive to try hard on the fundamental stuff earlier in the day.
- So long as you get a mix of subjects reasonably close to those on the first page, and your son/daughter is getting some of the "hard work" subjects in the lessons where s/he is the most awake, alert and productive, it's perfectly reasonable to let her/him have some choice of what happens on which day (perhaps with a ruling that any changes are planned and agreed on a Saturday, and cannot be changed again until the next Saturday!)
- Remember, too, you can change the order of the timetable to suit the family's household timetable. For example, if Friday evening is a special family eat-together meal, you might like to move that Technology session to a Friday, and make it into a Food Technology lesson, preparing something yummy for everyone to enjoy... [Yes, cooking and preparing food counts as Food Technology, and is a good skill to learn]
- If you need to interrupt part of the learning day to think about food shopping (whether in the supermarket or online – but please mask-up and be safe if it's in the supermarket) – this is a good opportunity to mix some maths with some more general understanding of what you need to buy to keep your household running, and how you budget for it. These are all skills your child will find useful in later life, and a very good part of your overall learning curriculum.

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The Timetable

Here is a possible timetable using 40-minute morning slots. Please change this to suit your child's needs, but please also bear in mind some of the hints I have given on the previous pages. ... and yes, if you do the maths, the minutes here may not quite add up to the hours in the table on page 1, but it's a close enough mix, and you will probably want some flexibility to suit your daughter or son's individual needs, your family household timetable, and so forth:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lesson 1 09:00-09:40	English	Maths	Humanities [Geog or RE?]	English	Maths
Lesson 2 09:40-10:20	Maths	English	Maths	Languages	Humanities [RE?]
Lesson 3 10:20-11:00	Humanities [Geog?]	Humanities [History?]	English Reading	Maths	English Reading
Break					
Lesson 4 11:20-12:00	Languages	Computing	English	Science	Computing
Lesson 5 12:00-12:40	Maths	Technology	Languages	Science	Computing
Lunch					
Lesson 6 13:40-15:00	Alternate weeks Computing / Expressive Arts	Sciences (Practical?)	Sport OR Technologies	Creative/Expressive Arts	Technologies OR Sport

Remember Humanities can be any of Geography, History, RE.

Wednesday and Friday afternoon – whichever you choose for Wednesday, do the other one on Friday!

Monday afternoon – swap alternate weeks or fortnights or whatever to get an even mix over each term.

You can juggle it to split something like Friday's double Computing if that doesn't suit your child's interests or aptitude.

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Just to help...

Here's a blank version of that timetable.

You can adjust the start time of the first lesson, and the other times through the day to suit your household schedule or how your son/daughter works. Some children work much better with an earlier start, some actually work better if they get up a bit later (provided you make them wake up and get moving!)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lesson 1 09:00-09:40					
Lesson 2 09:40-10:20					
Lesson 3 10:20-11:00					
Break					
Lesson 4 11:20-12:00					
Lesson 5 12:00-12:40					
Lunch					
Lesson 6 13:40-15:00					

Key Stage 2 Timetabling

Shorter morning lessons

Here's an option with 30 minute morning sessions (can then also split the afternoon ...)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lesson 1 09:00-09:30					
Lesson 2 09:30-10:00					
Lesson 3 10:00-10:30					
Break					
Lesson 4 10:50-11:20					
Lesson 5 11:20-11:50					
Lesson 6 11:50-12:20					
Lunch					
Lesson 7 13:00-15:00					

This may be “more lessons per day” – but they’re shorter slots, which may help some children (either Y3 and Y4, or those with shorter attention spans) focus better on work.)

That 2-hour afternoon can be split into 2 sessions if you like.

Both templates work out to 25 hours of teaching and learning per week, roughly the same as most primary schools at KS2.