

Head Teacher's Note:

Hi everyone,

We are all experiencing such challenging times that it's sometimes difficult to stay positive and I think that applies to all of us whether we are adults or children. Many of you have been juggling working from home and supporting your children with their home learning (again) since the beginning of January. Others of you have had to make alternative childcare provision at very short notice.

I know I am speaking for all staff when I say that there are a couple of very important things that have brightened up and actually made our days: 1) The children's smiling faces whether they are coming into school or, as class teachers keep telling me on the social chats on Zoom and 2) We have been overwhelmed at your messages of support and thanks. Some of these have come via email; via telephone or by you in person. I cannot begin to tell you how much these mean to us and how they help us to maintain a positive outlook, so thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Children as I mentioned above may also feel anxiety. They or we may not even realise they are anxious and it can come out in different ways. They may be quieter than usual or their behaviour may not be as good. Some of you have told us of the battles you face to get them to do their work. Although we can't offer places in school for that reason, as well as speaking to the class teacher, we can provide support from our Learning Mentor, Mrs Mulhall. If you feel your child would benefit from a Zoom meeting with her, please let us know.

We have also been sent the following link from Parent Safeguarding with '10 top tips for parents' offering advice on how parents can safeguard their child/ren's mental health and promote their wellbeing'. It is a handy resource with a short video to accompany it.

<https://ssscpd.co.uk/education/parentsandguardians/child-mental-health-10-tips-for-parents/-/pj>

May you all stay safe and well!

Julie Bratt



Remote Learning is going extremely well and we are really proud of our children's efforts but we do appreciate how hard it is for both parents and children at this time. We will be adding further advice and support to our website over the coming weeks.

Our top tips for wellbeing:

- Try to encourage your child to be ready and dressed for the start of the school day, and to keep to their timetable or routine as much as possible.
- Distinguish between weekdays and weekends, and make it clear when the school day is over, to separate home and school life.
- Plan breaks and exercise into the day to help keep your child active.

A Free Course to Help Parents and Students

Guide education are offering a free support course to share with parents and guardians. Browse the video titles on the dedicated webpage: <https://www.guideeducation.co.uk/parentsupport>

Sign up is free, no payment or code is needed.

The course includes topics such as how to manage working from home, working with your child (physical and verbal), select learning theories, social and emotional readiness, supporting your child to work, student-led problem solving and activities.



We hope you are all well and managing in these very difficult and strange times. We fully understand that due to current circumstances things are challenging for us all, so we have decided to include a Well Being page in our Newsletter as well as adding a Mental Health and Well Being section to our school website. The purpose of this, is to share information and services that may be of use to you and your family at any point in the future.

Online resources to support Mental Health and Wellbeing can be found on the following websites:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

<https://www.annafreud.org/>

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>

<https://www.healthforkids.co.uk/>

<https://www.samaritans.org/>

BEAM

BEAM is an emotional health and wellbeing service for children and young people under 25, who are registered with a GP in Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin. They have a team of experienced well-being practitioners and volunteers to support.

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/young-people/well-being/services/beam-shropshire-telford-wrekin>



Mindfulness is a great technique to use with children to support their wellbeing. There is an emerging body of research that indicates mindfulness can help children improve their abilities to pay attention, to calm down when they are upset and to make better decisions.

In short, it helps with emotional regulation and cognitive focus.

Mindfulness means paying full attention to something. It means slowing down to really notice what you're doing. Being mindful is the opposite of rushing or multitasking. When you're mindful, you're taking your time.

An Appreciation Practice Game for Children

Leading the Game:

- 1) Ask your child: "Do you ever feel disappointed by something or someone?"
- 2) Ask: "How did that make you feel?"
Acknowledge their feelings and, if appropriate, talk about them.
- 3) Say something like: "I bet even when you're feeling disappointed there are good things happening in your life, too. Let's name three good things together."

Tips for Naming Three Good Things:

- 1) Remind your child that the point of this game isn't to pretend they're not upset when they feel upset. It's to remember that they can feel two things at once: they can feel grateful for good things while feeling sad, hurt, or disappointed by challenges.
- 2) If children or teens have trouble thinking of three good things on their own, brainstorm and help them discover some.
- 3) When kids understand that this game is not about sweeping their feelings under the rug, the phrase "three good things" can become a playful and humorous response to the minor gripes that show up in family life.
- 4) Parents can encourage kids to remind them to name Three Good Things when they're stuck on a trivial disappointment or minor annoyance, too.
- 5) To develop a habit of thankfulness, play Three Good Things around the dinner table, before bedtime, and at other times when the family is together.

Ideas to Entertain the Children during Lockdown 3.0:



Become an Artist.

There are many online workshops and tutorials to help children learn to draw and create a masterpiece.

Take a Lego Challenge.

The Lego challenge is a printable calendar containing themed tasks for every day of the month. Children can let their imagination run wild with all manner of Lego creations, from hospitals and rollercoasters to an unbreakable safe in a bank. If they've already completed the 30-day challenge, there's also a 31-day challenge with new prompts.

Hold a Sensory Scavenger Hunt.

Scavenger hunts immediately make the world around you more exciting. It is lots of fun to do in nature but can also happen inside if the weather is keeping you in! To add an extra level think about how you can ask your child to use different senses, for example: 'find something that feels soft', 'find something that smells nice', 'find something that makes a noise'.

Have a Spa day!

Lots of us would enjoy a trip to the spa at the moment! Tell the children it's a spa day and spend some time pampering each other. You could paint nails, give each other massages, and even have a go at making your own face masks to look after your skin.

Be your Own Superhero.

Fancy dress is a brilliant way to get silly and have fun - for children and adults! You don't need fancy costumes: use a tea towel as a cape, pull on a pair of tights or put on some rubber gloves. Think about what your superpower is and what you use it for. Older children might enjoy thinking more about their character. They could draw a picture or make a comic about an adventure their hero has.

Websites with Useful Ideas:



<https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/what-we-do/coronavirus-information-advice/keeping-kids-entertained-during-lockdown>

<https://www.trentanddove.org/covid-19-support/12-activities-to-entertain-children-during-lockdown/>

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2021/01/lockdown-activities-kids-winter/>

<https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/guidance-advice/things-to-keep-kids-entertained-at-home/>

<https://www.netdoctor.co.uk/parenting/baby-and-toddler/a35137593/lockdown-activities-kids/>



Music:

Mrs Wilkinson will be updating the main music curriculum page over the weekend.

Check it out on Monday for home learning music resources suitable for all ages.



REMOTE EDUCATION 10 TOP TIPS FOR PARENTS

Remote education ensures continuous learning outside the classroom. For parents and carers, remote education isn't always straightforward and there can be a number of factors they need to consider, especially around ensuring their children feel comfortable and are familiar with the whole concept. That's why we've created this guide to help parents and carers support their child in getting the most out of their remote education experience.

1. TAKE AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

As a parent or carer, your school may have explained how remote education works already, but children may still need help. Take an active interest in their learning and help support them whenever they need a helping hand.



2. MONITOR YOUR CHILD'S COMMUNICATION AND ONLINE ACTIVITY

It's important to remind your child that despite being at home, the same level of behaviour and conduct exists as if they were at school. Encourage them to remain polite, remember their manners and not to post or send any negative comments just because they are behind a computer.



3. ESTABLISH A DAILY SCHEDULE AND ROUTINE

Working from home and trying to learn in a more casual setting that children might associate more with play and a degree of freedom might take a bit of getting used to. Try to stick to a daily routine and use the timetable/schedule that schools have sent home to help children keep on top of their daily learning.



4. ENCOURAGE SCREEN BREAKS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AWAY FROM DEVICES

Remote learning will inevitably require more interaction with computers, laptops and tablets. Teachers will invariably advise on screen breaks; however, it doesn't hurt to keep a check on their time online or encourage them to get some fresh air/exercise.



5. ENSURE YOUR LEARNING DEVICE IS IN PUBLIC SPACE IN THE HOME

It's important to consider where your PC or laptop is placed if live video is being used. Try to keep the background neutral, with no personal information visible and move learning devices out of the bedroom as this could be deemed inappropriate.



6. IMPLEMENT SAFETY CONTROLS AND PRIVACY RESTRICTIONS ON APPS AND SOFTWARE

Dependant on how your school implements remote education, your child may be required to download certain software or apps. Whilst these are likely to be relatively safe to use, like any other new app or platform, parents should still implement safety controls as a precaution.



7. ENSURE YOUR CHILD ONLY USES OFFICIAL SCHOOL COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

It's important that all communication with teachers and school staff is directed through approved school channels, whether that be through the school's online portal or the relevant secure messaging site.



8. FAMILIARISE YOURSELF WITH RELEVANT SCHOOL POLICIES

Schools should have a policy on remote education that they can share with parents. Familiarise yourself with this and ensure you know what is expected of teachers and your child during lessons, both online and offline.



9. MAINTAIN FEEDBACK WITH TEACHERS

Engage in communication with teachers where possible, and try to feed back progress and development as well as any helpful suggestions around the learning process. Be transparent but remain professional and only use official channels to communicate.



10. MONITOR YOUR CHILD'S WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Remote education will likely mean that your child won't get the same level of social interaction and might not see their friends for a while. Keep a check on their wellbeing and try to encourage them to get out as much as they can. Whilst learning from home might seem fun and exciting to start to with, missing out on seeing their friends every day might take its toll.



REMOTE EDUCATION 10 TOP TIPS FOR CHILDREN

Remote education ensures continuous learning outside the classroom. For students, it's the perfect way to ensure they still get the education they need, despite not being at school. However, it also requires a level of discipline and careful planning. That's why we've created this guide to help pupils understand different aspects of remote education and to support them in ensuring their experience is as safe and secure as it can be.

1. TREAT REMOTE EDUCATION THE SAME AS CLASSROOM LEARNING

Despite being at home, it's important to remember the same rules apply as being in the classroom, particularly in respect of behavior and conduct. Focus on learning and don't get distracted by your surroundings.



2. USE CLASSROOM LANGUAGE

If you are encouraged to communicate through emails and online messages, don't use shorthand text speak and write as though you would speak in class. Remember to be respectful and polite and avoid posting negative comments or spamming the chat.



3. TAKE REGULAR SCREEN BREAKS

Whilst remote education might be an exciting experience to begin with, having prolonged periods of time in front of a screen isn't always healthy. Remember to have regular screen breaks where possible and in your spare time, try to get some fresh air and enjoy other activities away from electronic devices.



4. ALWAYS CONDUCT VIDEO LEARNING IN AN OPEN SPACE AT HOME

To get the best experience from remote education, it's important to create the right environment around you. Try to set up a mock 'classroom desk' at home in an open space so parents can supervise if necessary. Avoid bedrooms as this could be considered inappropriate.



5. ONLY COMMUNICATE THROUGH APPROVED SCHOOL PORTALS AND PLATFORMS

It's important that you send messages and any pictures or images required for class through approved school channels, such as internal learning portals or approved platforms. This will help to keep your personal information safe and secure.



6. STICK TO TEACHER RULES AND GUIDELINES AROUND REMOTE EDUCATION

Your school should issue you with guidance on remote education and the rules to follow. Always maintain classroom behaviour and try to remember that you are in a learning environment and not a social setting.



7. DRESS IN SCHOOL UNIFORM

As part of your learning environment, try to maintain school uniform/dress. This will help as part of replicating classroom learning in the home. Try to avoid wearing anything too casual as this could be deemed inappropriate for school.



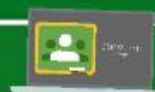
8. DON'T SHARE PASSWORDS OR OTHER SENSITIVE INFORMATION

In order to begin your online lessons or to gain access to learning materials, you may be provided with login details and passwords. In the same way you keep your personal details private, always keep these safe and never share them with others.



9. DON'T USE SCHOOL PLATFORMS TO DISCUSS PERSONAL MATTERS.

It's important to keep your school communication channels separate from your own personal communication with friends and family. Don't be tempted to engage in casual discussions or send images, videos or links via official school apps or platforms that aren't associated with your learning.



10. LOOK AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

Remote education ultimately means working alone and missing out on daily social interaction with your friends. If you ever feel frustrated, low or sad, it's important to discuss how you feel with your parents or your teacher. Keeping in touch with friends over the phone or on social media can also help to keep your spirits up.

