

Oxfordshire Virtual  
School for Looked After  
Children and Previously  
Looked After Children

## **Guide to Home Learning**

The aim of this guide  
to is to offer support  
and ideas to families  
who are in the  
position of having  
children at home  
whilst schools are  
shut.

This guide includes ideas and activities for learning and well-being. It also includes some resources that may be helpful if you want to talk to your child about Coronavirus and are not sure where to start.

What we all need to remember is that right now all children need to feel comforted and loved. These are unprecedented times, and everyone can feel anxious about the uncertainties of this situation. Some children may think that the idea of being off school sounds OK, but the reality of being at home for prolonged periods of time and not seeing their friends will be very hard for all of us.

Don't worry about academic progress at this point. All our children are in the same boat and when we do get back into the classroom, teachers will be able to address their needs from wherever they are. Children's mental health is going to be more important than academic skills. How they felt during this time will stay with them long after the memory of what they did.

For all families- focusing on relationship is going to be important. Getting a balance between encouraging productive activities and battling with children to do formal schoolwork is going to be tricky. Arguing with your child about doing schoolwork is not going to be productive. It is often much harder for parents and carers to teach their own children, so do what you can. Lots of activities are so worthwhile; read stories, make dens, watch TV together, play in the garden, do puzzles, look after pets and simply try and spend quality time with your children. Remember that this is likely to be a marathon and not a sprint so feeling safe and positive relationships are most important.

Over the coming weeks you may see an increase in emotional distress and behaviours that come with this. You might see anger, anxiety or protests that they can't do things they would normally do. This is normal and to be expected under these circumstances and adults will also be experiencing a range of emotions.

To support children; make a plan, have routines, but be flexible and do what you can in your own circumstances. This guide has some ideas for less formal activities and experiences as well as resources for supporting schoolwork. This is to support you and help keep your child's mind working and active.

Your child's school will also have provided you with online resources or learning packs. Most schools will have staff able to email updates and communicate regularly with families during this time.

Reminder to keep your children at home and not let them play outside with friends.

Check your school's website for more information.



## Making a plan

It's important for children to have some structure and routine. It's good for physical and mental health and helps avoid boredom!

Make your plan achievable and flexible.

Think about what **your child** needs.

Don't plan for too much and remember that it's OK to change things.

### Ideas for planning



- Try and have a morning routine - breakfast, getting dressed and washing etc.
- Think about your home space and resources- try and make a space for learning activities - however small - where you can keep resources and your child can sit comfortably.

- Make a timetable or daily plan and pin it up so it's visual.
- Keep it simple and add suggested times.
- Make sure there are some choices.
- Include some treats in the day.



- Headphones for music can help keep distractions down.
- Include some physical exercise.
- Include some non-screen time activities.
- Try and include some outside time e.g. garden or a walk.
- Include downtime and relaxing.
- Making lunch or snacks together or for each other could be part of the plan.
- How might you use ICT?
- Jot down ideas on your phone or in a notebook if you see good activities you could include.

- Check your school learning pack for ideas.
- Use online sites to get ideas.
- Think about household chores that could be part of the plan.
- Do you have hobbies or interests you can share with your family?
- Games and fun activities are just as important as school type work.



- Can you include some projects?
- Can you include online social contact- e.g. facetime friends or family?
- Stick to bedtimes.
- You know your child and if they need more structure or more flexibility.

Don't worry if you don't stick to the plan – every child is different. We are in stressful times. Some days may be easier. Choose your battles. Look after yourself.





## Ideas for easy things to do with children of all ages!



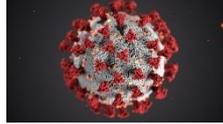
Reading a story. Reading together.	Construction- Lego, Knex, bricks	Sand pit	Water play- plastic trays, containers, washing up bowls	Finger painting Handprints
Make dens using sheets and blankets	Watch films together	Pasta shape painting and collage	'Paint' in the garden with water	Measure things with a rule or tape.
Play board games	Puzzles	Play shops	Play cafes	Make a house with a cardboard box
Make obstacle course	Trampoline	Make puppets out of socks	Scrapbooks	Make collages out of old magazines
Look at photos of animals, places etc	Look after pet and do a project about it	Simple cooking, sandwich making.	Baking – measuring, recipes, decorating.	Make your own play dough-salt dough
Make musical instruments with containers and rice etc	Make a show	Dance to music	Do a workout	Play card games
Make up a quiz and send it to friends by email	Treasure hunt- e.g. in the house and garden find 10 items to go in a matchbox.	Word games - I spy, 20 questions, alphabet memory games	I-pad games/ tablet games	Make your own board game
Do origami and send photos to friends	Colouring in	Birdwatch in the garden and learn to identify birds	Take photos of nature	Write a diary
Make a recipe book	Do a chore in the house	Child led project about an interest	Audible books/ story tapes	Learn to draw Make cartoons
Research a country	Make a quiz for the family online.	Older children deliver a lesson to younger children- could do online.	Learn a new language e.g. Duolingo website	Practice a musical instrument-use YouTube to learn.
Find a virtual tour of a museum or zoo	Google virtual tours	Webcams of volcanoes etc	Have fun doing hairstyles	Create outfits and do a fashion show

Take photos of things close up - challenge people to guess	Junk modelling	Papier Mache	Ready steady cook challenge- What can be made?	Press flowers collect leaves.
Make pretend potions in the garden.	Science experiments- float or sink in the washing up bowl or bath.	Make decorations like paper chains, pom poms, paper bunting.	Make a video to share with the family	Write stories or make a comic book
Make a joke book	Paint on pebbles	Karaoke? Find lyrics on google	Chalk drawing on the patio/doorstep.	Sewing activities. Learn to knit or crochet.
Grow cress seeds or grow an apple pip etc	Sketch in the garden or items in the house.	Create a playlist	Listen to podcasts	Relaxation exercises
Learn a new word a day	Watch a nature programme	Make up a 'Strictly' routine	Design a dream island/theme park on plain paper	Make shadow puppets using hands and a lamp on the wall
Paper plate crafts- make faces, decorate	Make jewellery from pasta shapes or rolled newspaper tubes	Doodle/ scribble and make pictures from the doodle	Make paper planes and see who's can fly the furthest	Indoor games – e.g. bowling alley out of plastic bottles, indoor cricket with a wooden spoon.
Tea party for toys	Hide and seek/ Simon says	Make a picnic and have it indoors or in garden	Create a time capsule with messages, pictures etc	Write letters or cards
Fact learning challenges- counties of the UK, capital cities, Kings and Queens	Make your own word searches	Learn magic tricks	Learn the alphabet in sign language	Play charades with movie/book/TV titles. Play Pictionary on scrap paper
Cutting and sticking activities	Write a play script	Make up stories using model characters such as lego/ play mobile	Ice cube experiments- melt, float, shine light through	Make ice lollies with squash and water.



# Useful links and resources

## About Coronavirus



### Highlight the links - then press ctrl and click to open the site

These links have stories and information that might make it easier to answer questions.

- How to talk to children about the virus.

<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>

- Good visual ppt about coronavirus-primary aged and upwards.

<https://carolgraysocialstories.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Pandemics-and-the-Coronavirus.pdf>

- Short story about Coronavirus- very visual and good for younger children

<https://www.mindheart.co/descargables>

- Social story about social distancing

<http://l.ead.me/bbPKG6>

- Film about handwashing

[https://www.thesun.co.uk/tvandshowbiz/11173751/mcfly-tom-fletcher-coronavirus-experiment/?utm\\_source=twitter&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=sharebarweb](https://www.thesun.co.uk/tvandshowbiz/11173751/mcfly-tom-fletcher-coronavirus-experiment/?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=sharebarweb)

- TES resources around Coronavirus – **All ages**

<https://www.tes.com/resources/search/?rawFilter=%28title%3ACoronavirus%20OR%20Covid-19%20OR%20Covid%29%20AND%20-%28price%3A%5B%2A%20TO%20%2A%5D%29>

If your child has special educational needs and you are concerned about school provision:

<https://www.ipsea.org.uk/news/ipsea-update-on-covid-19-school-closures-and-sen-provision>



## Resources to help with learning at home

There are a lot of resources online that can help you provide some activities for your child. School will also have ideas and resources for you to look at.

### Websites/links with resources that are suitable for all ages

- <https://chatterpack.net/blogs/blog/resources-list-for-home-learning>

Online / home learning resources lots to choose from-many education sites have opened their sites for free. Chatterpack has collated many resources for all ages.

- #drawwithrob on twitter

Children's book author -daily videos for children step by step how to draw simple characters/animals

- <https://whiterosemaths.com/resources/> online maths resources which may be useful All ages. You will need to register to get links to interactive resources.
- National Literacy Trust **All ages – literacy resources**

[https://literacytrust.org.uk/free-resources/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMlyP2Isfmj6AIVybTtCh2G1QNiEAMYASAAEgKiyfD\\_BwE](https://literacytrust.org.uk/free-resources/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMlyP2Isfmj6AIVybTtCh2G1QNiEAMYASAAEgKiyfD_BwE)

- UK Safer Internet Centre **All ages (except Early Years).How to stay safe online**

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/teachers-and-school-staff/teaching-resources>

- BBC Learning **All ages**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/coursesearch/>

This site is old and no longer updated and yet there's so much still available, from language learning to BBC Bitesize for revision. No TV licence required except for content on BBC iPlayer.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize> **All ages (except Early Years)**

- British Council

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources/find>

Resources for English language learning

- Twinkl

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

This is more for printouts, and usually at a fee, but they are offering a month of free access to parents/carers in the event of school closure.



- BookTrust

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/storybooks-and-games/>

Interactive stories and games

- <https://artsandculture.google.com/> has access to some of the world's finest museums and galleries. **Primary and Secondary**
- <https://thekidshoudseethis.com>  
Wide range of cool educational videos
- [resource-bank.scholastic.co.uk/resources/4391](https://resource-bank.scholastic.co.uk/resources/4391)

**Scholastic UK free downloadable resource packs from early years through to key stage 2**

- <https://www.intofilm.org/>

**Online film club with activities related to films for primary and secondary aged children**

- <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/hass-storytelling/imagineering-in-a-box>

**Disney Parks with Khan Academy free activity to create stories and experiences online.**

## **Resources/links for younger children -early years/primary**

- Cbeebies Radio **KS1 and Early Years**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/radio> Listening activities

- Cbeebies **Early Years**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies>

Lots of fun games to play, songs to sing, stories to listen to – linked to children's favourite TV characters/programmes

- The Imagination Tree **Early Years**

<https://theimaginationtree.com>

Creative art and craft activities for the very youngest.

- Hungry Little Minds **Early Years**

<https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk/>

Supported by the DfE – activities for parents/carers to engage in with children Birth to five years old. Includes electronic links to a variety of other EY online resources.



- Five Minute Mum's **Early Years**

<https://fiveminutemum.com/>

Lots of fun ideas. Provides an outline of how parents/carers could structure their day. In addition, she is planning to provide a video a day on what games to play.

- Teach your Monster to Read **Early Years**

<https://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/>

Phonics' and early reading. Free to register. Promoted and used by Oxfordshire schools

- Instagram **Early Years**

@oliverjeffers – he is going to read a story every night at 6pm

- Scratch **Primary**

<https://scratch.mit.edu/explore/projects/games/>

Creative computer programming

- Ted Ed **Primary**

<https://ed.ted.com>

All sorts of engaging educational videos

- National Geographic Kids **Primary**

<https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/>

Activities and quizzes for younger kids

- Crash Course Kids **Primary**

<https://m.youtube.com/user/crashcoursekids>

Twice weekly short science videos-cartoons.

- iDEA Awards **Primary**

<https://idea.org.uk>

Digital enterprise award scheme you can complete online.

- <https://blockly.games>

Learn computer programming skills - fun and free.

- Crash Course Kids **Primary**

<https://m.youtube.com/user/crashcoursekids>

As above for a younger audience

- Paw Print Badges **Primary**

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



Free challenge packs and other downloads. Many activities can be completed indoors. Badges cost but are optional.

- Oxford Owl for Home **Primary and Reception**

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/>

Lots of free resources

- <https://dogonalogbooks.com/printables/>

Books for struggling readers- downloadable

- Mystery Science **Primary**  
<https://mysteryscience.com>

Free science lessons

- <https://www.cricksoft.com/us/clicker/clicker-at-home>

Clicker software-image based reading and writing programme -good for emerging to struggling writers. Free during school closures.

## **Older children-Older primary/secondary**

- Tinkercad **Primary and Secondary**

<https://www.tinkercad.com>

All kinds of making activities.

- Crash Course **Primary and Secondary**

<https://thecrashcourse.com>

You Tube videos on many subjects

- Geography Games **Primary and Secondary**

<https://world-geography-games.com/world.html>

Geography gaming!

- Blue Peter Badges **Primary and Secondary**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/joinin/about-blue-peter-badges>

If you have a stamp and a nearby post box.

- Toy Theater **Primary and Secondary**

<https://toytheater.com/>

Educational online games



- Khan Academy **Secondary and KS2**

<https://www.khanacademy.org>

Especially good for maths and computing for all ages but other subjects at Secondary level. Note this uses the U.S. grade system but it's mostly common material. Vast range of resources and online tuition videos.

- Seneca **Secondary**

<https://www.senecalearning.com>

For those doing GCSE or A level. Tons of free revision content.

- Openlearn **KS4 and above**

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/>

Free taster courses aimed at those considering Open University, but everyone can access it. Adult level, but some e.g. nature and environment courses could well be of interest to young people.

- Duolingo **Secondary**

<https://www.duolingo.com>

Learn languages Web or app.

- Crest Awards **Secondary**

<https://www.crestawards.org>

Science awards you can complete from home.

- Big History Project **Secondary**

<https://www.bighistoryproject.com/home>

Multi-disciplinary activities

- <https://www.k12irc.org/tools/sketchnoting.php>

All about sketch noting- a great skill for kids to use to express their work

## How to get children motivated?!

Children often separate school from home so the idea of doing 'school type' work at home might be challenging for some.

Children vary in their abilities across lots of skills. Age will play a part in what kind of activities will work best. Some children may have special educational needs and may need adapted activities.

Ideas for motivation include...

Short bursts of work with breaks and rewards (which could be choosing time, praise.

Try and make some things a competition or a choice. Be flexible.

If you can, work alongside the child or get older children to help younger ones.

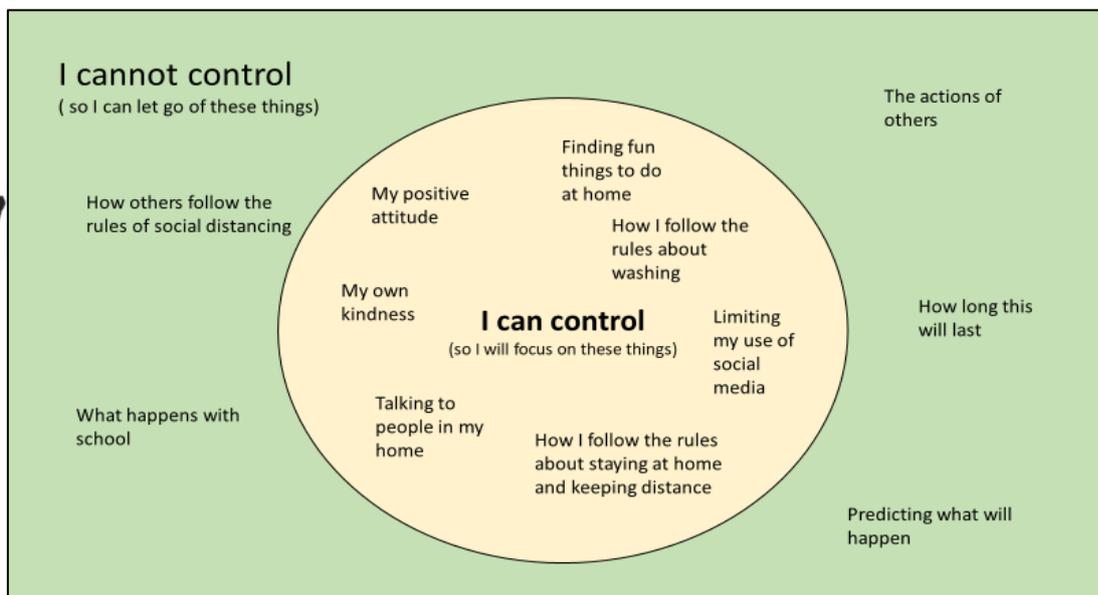
Try to get some tasks done in the morning and then enjoy down time.

## Well-being resources

Physical and mental health is going to be very important for your children and families.

Links here to activities and information for emotional and physical well-being.

Helpful graphic to help anxieties



- <https://theteacherist.com/2020/03/17/resource-pupil-wellbeing/>

Over 30 links to story books that help with emotional well-being. Free to download.

- PE with Joe Wicks #PEwithJOE  
9am every morning for 30 minutes live on You Tube. Free PE class for children of all ages- can follow in the living room!
- <https://thecounselingteacher.com/>

Ideas for social and emotional activities

- <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/daily-routine/indoor-play-activities/wet-play-colouring-sheets>

Colouring sheets

- <https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/category/free-resources/>

Free downloadable resources of all kinds -helpful for pupils anxious about being off school.

- <https://www.justcolor.net/>  
Free printable colouring sheets for relaxation
- <http://www.freemindfulness.org/>

Free to download meditation exercises

- The Top 5 Free Mindfulness Apps -Headspace, Calm , Aura, Stop, Breathe and Think, Insight Timer

Enjoy learning and make the most of opportunities to learn important skills for life. Remember that school don't expect you to be a teacher. If you are not confident or unsure – ask your child's school for help or contact the Virtual School for advice.

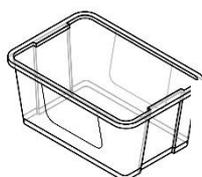
Stay connected with school and check emails, Facebook pages and websites to keep up to date with what's going on and any advice and resources they have put in place.

### Enjoy reading

Just a little bit of daily reading can boost a child's vocabulary, decoding and understanding of the text.

10 minutes a day makes a huge difference.

Fiction or fact books are both great.



Maybe set up a book box for children to choose from.

Borrow and swap books.

<https://stories.audible.com/start-listen>

Audible have put lots of children's books up on their site for FREE and you don't need to sign up- you just press listen and hear a story.

Children of all ages enjoy being read to. Its especially important to read to younger children but why not do a bedtime story for all ages?

