

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week, we are including some ideas and helpful web links to support your child's wellbeing while they are at home.

Helping Children Cope with Change

It is very likely that, during the ongoing changes we face, children will need additional support to express and understand their own anxieties and feelings. How children perceive the current changes to the lockdown will vary depending on their age and cognitive understanding, with one common factor, the feeling of confusion. These feelings of confusion may be very challenging, frustrating or frightening for them to grasp and can leave children feeling overwhelmed. It is important that we listen to and acknowledge their emotions, giving them the time and opportunity to talk about them.

As with any emotionally charged situation, children's feelings often emerge in physical or verbal (mis)behaviour. They are trying to convey something to us and we may need to take the time to understand what they are trying to say.

Places to go for Support and Advice

This website from the **NHS** offers expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your child's mental health and wellbeing as well as the rest of the family.

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

NSPCC

The **NSPCC** are offering support and advice if you feel your child is struggling with their mental health and anxiety due to the coronavirus. More information and advice can be found on their website. <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/coronavirus-advice-support-children-families-parents/>

The **Positive Young Minds** website has some excellent advice for parents whose children may be worried or anxious including signs and symptoms and ways to help. <https://positiveyoungmind.com/8-worry-busting-tips-to-support-childhood-anxiety/>

Positive Young Minds



The **BBC Newsround** site has a comprehensive section on coronavirus with text and video guidance. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51204456>

Attached to this newsletter are leaflets entitled "Tips on Surviving School Shutdown and Coronavirus Anxiety", "How to be okay when school is closed" and "Talking to children about Coronavirus" which have some good information and advice for parents and are well worth a look.

Communicate any concerns with school

If you have any worries or concerns about your child's emotional behaviour or wellbeing, please let us know. There will be things that we can do to try and help and support you.

Cathryn Wicks
Deputy Headteacher



WCWAid

West Cornwall Women's Aid
01736 367539

<https://www.wcwaid.co.uk/helpline>



Home-Learning Review

Thank you to all of you who completed our Home-Learning Questionnaire via the Survey Monkey links sent out last week.

We had responses from approximately 45% of parents which is a good representative sample. The overall feedback was one of gratitude to the teachers for their efforts in providing the online materials and work for children, and for responding to the need for this so quickly.

The purpose of the survey was to help us to identify areas where we can improve the work we set online in order to better meet your needs. There were some recurring themes coming up in the parental responses, as well as some specific suggestions.

I will try to cover as many of these in an FAQ section here.

Q. Can we have more interactive / teacher led lessons please?

A We had some security concerns around the use of some online group conference apps. However, we believe that we can now use these safely as long as we follow some good online safety practices, and class teachers are going to trial the use of these for occasional teacher led interactive video lessons.

Q. I don't have access to a printer and many of the worksheets are posted in pdf format. Can they be posted as Word docs?

A We have asked teachers to post worksheets as both Word and pdf documents. In addition Year 5 and 6 have been using an app called Showbie (<https://www.showbie.com/features/>) for some time now. The plan is to extend this to Years 3 and 4; it perhaps doesn't lend itself so easily to the younger year groups.

Q It would be nice to have more direct feedback from some staff about the work set.

A As with the previous answer, Showbie will provide the opportunity for staff to feedback to pupils in their classes.

Q I'm unsure how some things are taught these days, especially in maths. Can we have some instruction on the calculation methods being used please?

A Yes, we have asked that where a particular calculation method is needed, that this is explained via a link that parents or children can use.

Q I have three children who all need to be on our computer at the same time to access their work – any suggestions?

A We are happy to loan iPads to families who need them at no charge. All we ask is that they are returned in the condition they left us by the end of term.

Q I have heard that the Government are providing computers and internet access to families who need them but are not in a position to provide their own.

A The Government announced this scheme back in April; the full guidance can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19#who-can-receive-digital-devices-and-internet-access>. Unfortunately, the eligibility criteria are much more limited than the headlines suggested and the only primary aged pupils who can access this scheme are those who have been 'in care' and or have a social worker.

Q Is it possible to operate a system where we can still access books from the reading schemes from school please?

A We understand that where children are on the school's Reading Scheme (coloured bands) it would be useful to access books from their particular stage on that scheme. We are looking into a way that this can be set up so that books that are borrowed are quarantined for at least 72 hours before being lent out again in order to reduce the risk of infection spreading.

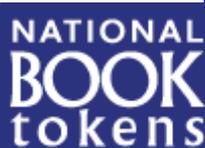
Q I'm finding it harder and harder to motivate my child to take on the tasks set.

A It is understandable that it is difficult to create a school environment in your home, and that the relationship that you have with your child is very different to that of the teacher. Added to this, there will undoubtedly be some Home-Learning fatigue creeping in the longer that the school remains closed. We are sending home some leaflets with this week's newsletter and those entitled "How to be okay when schools are closed" and "Tips on Surviving School Shutdown" may have information which is helpful.

We need you!

Please help us win £5,000 of National Book Tokens for the school library - and get £100 for yourself! Enter the competition online, it only takes a minute:

[http://
www.nationalbooktokens.com/
schools](http://www.nationalbooktokens.com/schools)



Remember – safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility

If you have a safeguarding concern, please contact Martin Higgs (Designated Safeguarding Lead) at head@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk or, if it is out of school hours, please contact the Multi Agency Referral Agency on 0300 1231 116;
E-mail: multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk

Contacting School

Please be aware that whilst school remains open for some children, there will be no admittance to the building or grounds for any parents, visitors or children not currently at school. If you need to contact us, please do so by email

(secretary@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk)

or by calling the office between 9am-1pm, Monday to Friday on 01736 364087.

Have we got your correct address?

In the coming weeks we may be posting important information home to you. If you’ve changed your address recently or are unsure if we have the correct address for you, please let the office know as soon as possible.

Outstanding monies

As the end of the school financial year is approaching please check your Schoolmoney account and pay any outstanding monies owed as soon as possible. This includes payments for Breakfast club, extra nursery sessions, past trips, etc.

To stop the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), you should try to avoid close contact with anyone you do not live with.

This is called social distancing.

Stay at home as much as possible.

It's very important to stay at home as much as possible.

There are only a few specific reasons to leave your home, including:

- for work, if you cannot work from home
- going to shops to get things like food and medicine, or to collect things you've ordered
- to exercise or spend time outdoors
- for any medical reason, to donate blood, avoid injury or illness, escape risk of harm, provide care or help a vulnerable person.

When outside your home, it's important to try to stay 2 metres (3 steps) away from anyone you do not live with.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

This is an unusual time and we are conscious that some people and families will be finding it difficult. We have included some helpline numbers on this page in case anyone finds them useful.



NHS
Cornwall Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

The Trust has its own Out of Hours telephone support provided by Support Matters Cornwall. This service operates from 5pm to 9am on weekdays and 24 hours a day at weekends and bank holidays. The service is open to all patients (aged 16+) under the care of the Trust's mental health services. Support can be delivered over the telephone, via text, email or web chat. Call free on **0800 001 4330**.



Penzance CTIPA Foodbank
The CTIPA Foodbank in Penzance has let us know that it is no longer necessary to obtain a voucher to receive food from them and that they are open every day at the moment. If their support would be helpful to you at this time, just phone Veryan or Adele in the office in confidence on 01736 364087 and they can phone the Foodbank for you who will be able to help. The Foodbank are extremely busy at the moment and are very grateful for any donations.



NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE
0808 2000 247
24/7 CONFIDENTIAL FREEPHONE



Online Safety

Whilst there are huge benefits to being online in order to stay connected to family and friends during this period, many parents may feel concerned about the activities and content their children are accessing. This guidance outlines resources to help keep children safe from different risks online and where to go to receive support and advice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online>

At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.



14 WAYS TO BE KIND ONLINE

Showing kindness online can mean so much to someone else. It is a choice we can all make that helps others, puts people's needs before our own and which can generate feelings of empathy and compassion. Small gestures can have a large impact and often one act of kindness can lead to more, making the world a happier and more positive place. That's why we've created this guide to suggest a few simple 'acts of kindness online' that can benefit people's mental health, support their wellbeing and encourage a more positive approach to engaging online.



1. BE POSITIVE

Post about things that make you happy and that you're thankful for. It could brighten up someone else's day.



Sometimes a friend or family member might post a question online or ask for help with something they can't do themselves. If you know the answer or are able to offer help, provide support and send a response. Something that may be easy for you might be difficult for someone else.



If somebody you know has done something good or shown kindness themselves, thank them for it. It costs nothing and showing them that you appreciate it means so much.

4. SHARE FUNNY VIDEOS OR IMAGES WITH FRIENDS & FAMILY

We often come across funny videos or images online that make us laugh and then we move on. If you found it funny, your friends and family might too. It could help someone smile who may be having a bad day.

5. LIKE, LOVE & CELEBRATE

If somebody posts something that you like on social media, like it, love it or celebrate it! It's a small gesture but could mean a lot.

6. VIDEO CALL YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY

It can be easy to be consumed by daily routine. Using apps like Zoom, FaceTime or WhatsApp are great for connecting with others far away and shows you're thinking of them even though you can't physically meet them in person.

7. TELL SOMEONE YOU'RE THINKING OF THEM

We can't always tell how people are feeling online and just dropping somebody a message to ask if they're ok or that you're thinking of them could literally make their day.

8. SHARE POSITIVE POSTS

If you see something online that inspires you, share it with people you know. An inspirational quote, a beautiful photo or a motivational video can lift spirits, improve self-esteem and help make people feel better about themselves.

9. HOST AN ONLINE QUIZ

Video conferencing apps are a great way to get friends and family together. If you know someone who is feeling lonely, host an online quiz and invite them to join in. It could really cheer them up.

10. THINK BEFORE YOU COMMENT

Sometimes thinking before you act can be just as significant as acting in the first place. Showing thought before you comment could stop you posting something hurtful, offensive or negative. It's always better to post positively or post nothing at all.

11. BE COMPASSIONATE & UNDERSTANDING

Being empathetic towards others and their situation is often an act of kindness and selflessness that gets overlooked. If you notice someone who is upset, drop them a message and offer to listen.

12. CONNECT FRIENDS & FAMILY WITH SIMILAR INTERESTS

You may know two people amongst your friends and family who you trust and know well who have similar interests and likes. Introducing them can be a great way for them to make new friends but remember to always ask their permission first.

13. RECOMMEND SOMETHING YOU ENJOY DOING TO OTHERS

If you enjoy doing something online, such as playing a game, or if you've found a great learning resource, share it with others. Even if you've watched a good film, letting others know can be an act of generosity that brings them excitement or pleasure at a time when they might need it the most.

14. PRAISE OTHERS FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS

Sometimes your friends or family might post something online that they're proud to have done. It might be an exam they've passed, learning a new skill or just completing a task. Either way, it's always kind to recognise hard work and effort through praise and celebration.

Meet our expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department for Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



Free School Meals

At this time, many families may find themselves eligible for Free School Meals and Pupil Premium who previously did not meet the criteria. Please read this page carefully to find out if you are now eligible. Our Pupil Premium Parent Guide is being sent home alongside today's newsletter to provide you with more information.

Cornwall Council are continuing to process new applications for Free School Meals. **Please ensure that you read the eligibility criteria before applying** and complete the online application form if you are eligible.

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-colleges/school-meals/application-for-free-school-meals-and-pupil-premium/>

Postal applications are currently not being accepted but, if you are unable to apply online, you can call the Free School Meals team on 01872 323298 and a member of the team will call you back to complete the application over the phone. Please make sure that your phone will accept calls from a private number.

NB All Key Stage 1 (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) pupils are entitled to receive a free school meal as part of the Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) initiative, regardless of what benefits are being claimed. Whilst schools are closed to most pupils during the current Covid-19 pandemic, schools are not required to provide meals or vouchers to Key Stage 1 children who usually receive free meals under the Universal Infant Free School Meals scheme but are not currently attending school.

However, some children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and receiving Universal Infant Free School Meals (as well as all Key Stage 2 children) may have an underlying entitlement to benefits-related Free School Meals. Schools will make arrangements for these children to receive free meals through food parcels or supermarket vouchers.

Your child may be eligible for benefits-related free school meals if you, or the child themselves in their own right, receives any of the following benefits:

- Income Support (IS)
- Job Seekers' Allowance (Income-Based) and equal based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA-IR) and equal based Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (CTC) with an annual income of less than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Guarantee Element of Pension Credit (GPC)
- Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (IAA) Support
- Universal Credit - Your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get) as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods

If you are claiming the benefits listed below you are **NOT** eligible for free school meals, regardless of what other benefits/credits are being claimed:

- Working Tax Credit
- Contribution-Based Job Seeker's Allowance and/or Contribution-Based Employment and Support Allowance

However, you will be temporarily eligible to claim free school meals if you receive a **Working Tax Credit run-on**, which is the payment you may receive for a further four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

If you think that your child is eligible for Free School Meals, we strongly recommend that you contact Cornwall Council as detailed above.