



# How to support home learning

Follow this guidance to continue to create a positive learning environment at home

---

## Be realistic about what you can do

**You're not expected to become teachers** and your children aren't expected to learn as they do in school. Simply **providing your children with some structure** at home will help them. Use the tips below to help you make this work for your household:

**Think about the last 3 weeks.** What's working and what isn't? Ask your children, involve them too.

**Take care of your own health and wellbeing.** This will be new for your entire household, so give it time to settle. Take a look at the links at the end of this factsheet for some advice on mental health and wellbeing. Wellbeing guidance reminds us that children will look to you to see how you are reacting in order to know how to feel. Showing them an example of remaining upbeat, hopeful and discussing the positives or new things that you can try will be helpful.

---

## Keep to a timetable wherever possible

**Create and stick to a routine.** As we all know it is important to have a routine and a structure for your weekdays that works for you. Keeping bedtime and morning routines close to existing ones can promote a sense of normality that children will find reassuring. A consistent routine lets everyone be secure about the plans for the day.

**Involve your children in setting the timetable** where possible. They are more likely to 'buy in' to new rules and routines if they feel that they have a voice. Family meetings where children and adults problem-solve together can be helpful for this, <https://bristolchildparentsupport.co.uk/ready-family-meetings/>.

If you have more than 1 child at home, **consider combining their timetables.** For example, they might exercise and do maths together – see what works for your household.



**Try to avoid putting too much pressure on academic work** and avoid trying to recreate a full school timetable. Have a look at the suggested timetable on the school website.

**Stick the timetable up on the wall** so everyone knows what they should be doing when, and tick activities off throughout the day. Children should do some learning every day. Continuing with their learning helps promote a sense of normality and purpose.

**Make weekdays and weekends different**, to separate school life and home life.

---

## Make time for exercise and breaks throughout the day

**Start each morning** with a [PE lesson](#) at 9am with Joe Wicks.

If you have a **garden, use it regularly**. If you don't, try to get **out once a day** as permitted by the government (households can be together outdoors but 2 metres apart from others at the moment).

Try to **balance screen time with other activities**. Challenge children to learn new skills that don't involve screens e.g. tying shoe laces, juggling, baking, drawing, origami.

Other physical activity ideas:

Disney based activities: <https://www.nhs.uk/10-minute-shake-up/shake-ups>

Short active games: <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities>

GoNoodle: Good energy at home provides ways for families to move and learn together.

<https://www.gonoodle.com/good-energy-at-home-kids-games-and-videos/>

Drama based ideas: <https://www.mousetrap.org.uk/every-home-a-theatre>

Older children and teens might respond better to fitness videos which you could do together as a family, <https://www.fitnessblender.com/>.

---

## Other activities to keep children engaged throughout the day

Get your children to **write or draw postcards** to their grandparents or their friends.

Ask grandparents/friends to **listen to your children read** on FaceTime (or ask grandparents to read to younger children).

If possible find opportunities for them to **interact with their friends remotely**. Technology provides lots of opportunities for students to connect, chat and play games together. **But be**



**careful** of giving unsupervised access to platforms that you would not normally allow your child onto; the internet still poses the same risks as in normal times. The UK Safer Internet Centre offers guidance on setting up parental controls and filters (<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>).

**Give them chores** so they feel more responsible about the daily routine at home.

Accept that **they'll probably watch more TV/spend time on their phone** – that's ok but you might want to set/agree to some screen time limits. Parenting forums talk about 'Keeping boundaries firm', it might be helpful to make it clear that you **expect the same standards of behaviour** as usual. Boundaries show that adults are **still in control** and taking care of them, which helps **children to feel safe**.

---

## And finally...

Good to remember that schools **have not 'shut down.'** Although most children will not be able to physically attend school, you will still **receive communication** from senior leaders and, in some cases, teachers and therapists.

'Mindfulness in School's Project' reminds us that **stress and anxiety are normal feelings** for you and your children to experience. **Naming these emotions** when you sense them can support young people to make sense of them. Remind them that many other children and families around the world are experiencing the same unusual situation.

For **wellbeing**, consider reducing **access to rolling news**. It will be important to stay up to date with announcements and developments, but it can be hard to switch off from constant streams.

We have created a **reward chart that you could use to celebrate your child's successes** and praise their efforts. Teachers will continue to put pupils' names into the Nando's draw when they demonstrate school values through high quality, focused work.

The 'Happyself Journal' suggests **reflecting on positive moments** and things that you all feel grateful for every day. This can be done in activities such as a gratitude journal, a 'share a positive' game, asking questions such as 'what are you pleased with?' or 'what did you enjoy today?', doing a 'good news' report.

You are doing an **amazing job** in these very strange times!