



SCHOOL CLOSURE- NEWSLETTER 2

01404 812599 Friday 3rd April 2020. Website www.west-hill-primary.devon.sch.uk

Dear Parents,

First of all, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who contacted me with such supportive comments about last week's newsletter and apologise that I wasn't able to respond to you all individually. I'm so pleased it was received so warmly and made many of you feel reassured about the challenges of home schooling. Despite being the Easter holidays, school is still open to provide childcare to pupils of key workers. Over the last two weeks the number of pupils in school have varied from 11 to 0 each day. I am very fortunate to have such a caring and committed set of teachers who have all willingly given up their Easter holiday to provide childcare where needed.

I hope you are all enjoying your daily exercise? Kara Green (Aura yoga studios & treatment room) has produced some free yoga and mindfulness on from home via the Zoom app on Tuesdays 12.45-1.15pm (repeated on Thursdays at the same time). Children and parents are saying they are really grateful for it, which is wonderful!

Download the Zoom app and to join the meeting click on

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/365844781?pwd=dXNERERBajU5N1pKcDRVdFBuWTZyUT09>

Meeting ID: 365 844 781

Password: 029704

Coronavirus support for school, parents and pupils

Babcock has a new webpage with Coronavirus support for schools, parents and pupils, which is being regularly updated with useful resources. As we know, the coronavirus pandemic is affecting all public services at the moment and affecting individuals at a personal level in many different ways this means that school staff, children and young people and their families will be feeling a complex mix of emotions and perhaps feeling overwhelmed. We have therefore added a number of practical resources and online help to our website for school staff and for children and their families. This includes:

- Information, guidance, useful links and teaching resources to use with all pupils including pupils with a SEND and pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Learning at home resources and activities
- Activities to support mental health
- Useful links to help explain coronavirus to children
- Link to support calming Coronavirus anxiety in children
<https://www.babcockldp.co.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-support-for-schools-parents-and-pupils>

“ Look how much you've already managed to adapt to. Look how resilient you've already been. There's no "right" way to respond to this because it's never, ever happened before. Give yourself some credit. ☆ There's no one in the whole world who has this figured out yet. So it's absolutely okay if you don't either ♡ ”
mellow doodles “”

Devon Schools Covid 19 website page

This has now been set up and provides key messages and information for schools and parents on the Covid 19 situation.

Key information available includes:

- school closures,
- what this means for schools and parents in Devon
- Should I send my child to school?
- DfE coronavirus helpline
- School resources and information on key workers and messages for parents.

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/document/schools-and-families/>

Home learning packs for each year group

Classroom Secrets have created home learning packs to take the stress out of these uncertain times due to the outbreak of coronavirus.

Each pack contains all you'll need to ensure your children continue to learn during any school closure.

<https://classroomsecrets.co.uk/free-home-learning-packs/>

ADVICE FOR PARENTS WANTING TO HOMESCHOOL DURING SCHOOL SHUTDOWN. IT'S GOING TO BE STRESSFUL. IF THINGS GET WORSE, YOU'RE GOING TO BE STRESSED. YOUR KIDS MIGHT BE SCARED OF THINGS THEY HAVE SEEN AND HEARD. ARGUING WITH THE KIDS TO DO THE WORK ISN'T WHAT WE NEED RIGHT NOW. CUDDLE UP TOGETHER, AND READ. TAKE TURNS READING. READ, READ, READ. DO A PUZZLE. BUILD A FORT OUT OF BLANKETS. SET UP A TENT IN THE LIVING ROOM. LOOK AT PHOTOS FROM WHEN YOU WERE A KID. GET OUTSIDE IN NATURE. DON'T STRESS ABOUT THEM FORGETTING. DON'T STRESS ABOUT HOME SCHOOLING. JUST SPEND TIME TOGETHER. IT'S A SCARY TIME. BUT IT COULD VERY WELL BE A TIME THEY REMEMBER AS THE BEST IN THEIR LIVES.

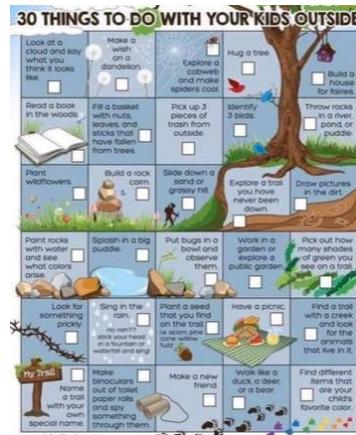
No internet or poor internet?

If you are concerned that your child cannot access online materials, or that screen time for the entire length of the school day can have a negative effect on children's wellbeing then have a look at these 4 documents for ideas:

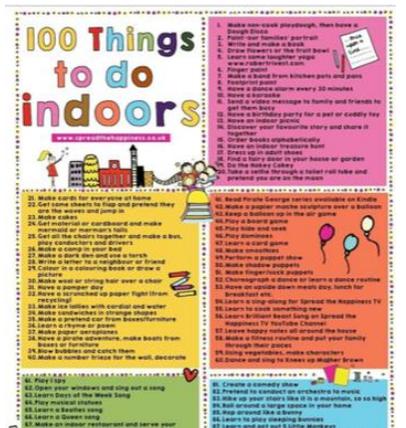
<https://medium.com/pobble/simple-and-fun-non-screen-activities-that-children-can-do-at-home-115543cb3b9c>



<https://www.spreadthehappiness.co.uk/product/60-things-to-do-for-adults-indoors/>



<https://www.parktrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/30Things.pdf>



<https://www.spreadthehappiness.co.uk/product/100-things-to-do-indoors/>

Mental Health Reminder

Get Dressed

Even if it's just into comfort clothes, this will help you feel more productive and less in a rut.

Do Your Hair/Makeup

Even if you're not going anywhere this can help make you feel "normal" in a very chaotic time. People also often feel relaxed when doing hair or makeup and you deserve that.

Eat New Healthy Recipes

If you can, eat a variety of food and try different recipes. This will give you day variety and keep your body feeling healthy

Get Some Fresh Air

Fresh air will help you not feel so cooped up or "stuck" in your home. Getting outside would be best but even standing at a window will be beneficial.

Be Creative

Try doing new activities or bring back old ones. Getting creative is a great way to keep your spirits up and your mind relaxed.

Unplug

Everyone everywhere is talking about the virus. Turn off your devices and get some well deserved time away.

Stay Connected

Even though we can't go visiting, make sure you stay connected. A good way is Video chatting or even just a phone call. This will help you and the people you are talking to feel less isolated.

Reach Out

Mental health is always important but it is especially important during times like this. Reach out if you need to and remember to check in with your friends and family. We are all in this together!

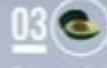
HOW FAMILIES CAN SUPPORT EACH OTHER'S MENTAL HEALTH DURING SELF ISOLATION



01 Check in with each other on a regular basis. How are you feeling today? Is there anything I can do to help?



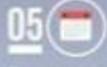
02 Engage in some shared activities together. Doing this in a group can increase motivation and is great for reducing stress.



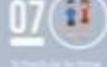
03 Get some really simple health rules in place that you can all follow if it's not possible to go outside. We will make sure to do these and not stress with each other every night!



04 Set a challenge to learn a new thing each week. Spend 5-10 minutes each day to practice doing it.



05 Organise and plan your week together. Make sure everyone understands what work or school related activities are coming up over the next 7 days.



07 Schedule to share during your week where you can all engage in some activities that provide you with a sense of achievement.



08 Work together as a team. Be a strong unit that supports, listens and encourages.



06 Spend 5 minutes each morning when you wake up to engage in some breathing exercises as a family.



09 Identify self-care activities that you can do together and individually if it's working together!



10 Make sure you provide support for each other because you can find time to relax on your own.



NSPCC Learning (which is primarily aimed at people who work with children) has updated 'How to have difficult conversations with children' content to include references to Coronavirus:-

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/how-to-have-difficult-conversations-with-children/>

Childline have developed a new page on the virus, which has lots of helpful information for children:-

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/>

Key workers

Please remember that school is still open for pupils of key workers if you are unable to keep your child safe at home. Please e-mail admin@... by **6pm** if you require childcare for the following day. This helps us to ensure adequate staffing is arranged and ensures that staff do not make unnecessary travel.

Thank you.

What are Worry Dolls?

Worry dolls are tiny dolls that children tell their worries to before placing them under their pillow at night.

The worry dolls take the children's worries away while they sleep.

They are a lovely opportunity to encourage children to talk about how they are feeling.

What to do:

- Break your sticks or twigs into small lengths (about 5cms).
- Wrap different colours of wool, ribbon or thread around your stick (use a skin colour towards the top for a face). Tie off the ends.
- Felt tip a face onto your doll.

Worry Dolls

What you need:

- small sticks or twigs
- wool, ribbon or thread
- felt tip pens

THE WORRY DOLL

I'm your little worry doll.
Keep me by your side.
When worry pop into your head.
Don't let the tears slide.

I will always listen.
I am laid right next to you.
Tell me how you're feeling.
No need for feeling blue.
Tell me all your secrets.
And let me comfort you.
When the night time comes.
Then sleep will take you through.

My magic is so powerful.
It sets you free from harm.
Your dreams will be happy.
And your morning full of calm.

By Debbie Palphreyman
©ELSA Support 2016