



Neston Primary School

Supporting your child's wellbeing

Take care of yourself

It is really important right now to take care of your own physical and mental health. Children are very perceptive, and they react to what they sense from the adults around them.

Here are some things you can do to help keep yourself healthy:

- **Connect with others** – maintain relationships with people you care about through phone and video calls.
- **Exercise** – take some time every day to move. You could go for a walk or run. You will also find many fitness videos online for everything from yoga to dance. Find something you enjoy and that makes you feel good.
- **Eat healthy meals** – try to keep a well-balanced diet and drink enough water.
- **Get some sleep** – being anxious or worried can have a big impact on your sleep. If you are struggling to get a good night's sleep, try to develop a calming bedtime routine – for example, do 10 minutes of yoga or listen to calming music. There are also apps you can download that provide guided meditation to help you get to sleep more quickly.
- **Turn off the news** – it is important to keep up to date, but the 24-hour news cycle can make you more anxious. Limit your exposure to the news to only a small amount of time, just enough to know what the latest government guidance is.
- **Do things you enjoy** – now that we are all spending more time at home, we can finally take up that hobby we have always meant to learn. Try baking, gardening, or learning to knit. These are also great activities we can share with our children.
- **Set goals** – it is easy to lose track of the days in our current situation, so it can be helpful to set daily and weekly goals to give us a sense of control and purpose. Examples might be setting a goal of walking for half an hour at least 3 times a week or reading a new book.
- **Connect with the outdoors** – depending on where you live, it may not be possible to spend time outside. If you do not have a garden or terrace, you can still open a window to let some fresh air and sunlight in. Put a comfortable chair by the window so you can look outside and get some air as you read a book.
- **Talk to someone** – during this difficult time, sharing with family and friends how you are feeling and what you are doing to cope can be helpful for both you and them. There are also helplines you can call for support – we have included a list at the end of this pack.

Children are aware of change

Children will likely be experiencing major changes to their daily routines during the COVID-19 outbreak. It is important that when talking to children, the information needs to consider their age and level of understanding.

Children need to be given honest information about changes. Without this, they will try to make sense of it themselves. It is important to understand what your child believes about the spread of the coronavirus. Children also pick up on adults' emotional states and changes to their lives- if their parents and carers are behaving differently and this is not explained to them – it can lead to further anxiety.

It is important to know that anxiety can present its self in lots of ways- it is not just about being tearful, upset or worried. It could be presented as being challenging or argumentative. They could be struggling to sleep, or have physical symptoms like stomach-ache or bed wetting.

Importance of speaking to your child

Children pick up bits of information from their friends, from the news and from listening to adults talking around them – but they can misunderstand what they are hearing. It is important to have conversations with your child about their emotions and to share how they are feeling, so they are not dealing with this alone.

The best thing is to be honest about the uncertainty of the pandemic. Balance this with explaining to the children that there are people all over the world, working together to find medicines for this virus, to keep people safe and to make them better. However, this will take some time and this is why we have to stay at home, so we can keep ourselves and others safe.

- Give them age-appropriate information – take a look at:
- [BBC Newsround hub](#) – regularly updated with information and advice
- [#covibook](#) – for under 7s
- [Children's guide to coronavirus](#) – a download from the Children's Commissioner to help explain the situation to children

Top Tips:

1. Look after your own mental health.
2. Be aware of your own reactions- children often take cues from adults in their lives, so try to be calm, listen and acknowledge their concerns.
3. Find ways to manage your own stress- take time out, go for a walk etc.
4. Acknowledge when your child is behaving differently. Recognize that challenging behaviour may be a result of anxiety.
5. Talk to your children about how they are feeling and how you are feeling but be cautious not to overwhelm them with your fears.
6. Ensure your children that as a family you will look after one another.
7. Explain what things we have to do to keep safe, e.g. wash hands, only leave the house once a day for exercise.
8. Ensure you use reliable sources for information, GOV.UK or NHS websites. Limit their exposure to the media and talk about anything they have seen or heard.
9. Check what your child is thinking about it all so you can correct any errors and fill in any knowledge gaps.
10. Create a new routine- make Monday to Friday more structured.

If your child struggles with higher levels of anxiety

Some children are naturally more anxious, such as those with existing phobias or obsessive-compulsive disorders. The current situation can make those anxieties worse.

- Get them to do activities such as counting, ordering and sorting tasks, which can help them calm down.
- Encourage them to use relaxation techniques such as controlled breathing.
- Look out for obsessive or compulsive behaviours and try to get ahead of them early by challenging unhelpful thoughts and assumptions.
- If you are worried about your child's anxiety, **YoungMinds** is a charity dedicated to children's mental health. They have opened a [parents' helpline](#) for confidential, expert advice. You can reach them at 0808 802 5544.

Helplines and websites for children and young people

If your child would like to speak with someone confidentially, there are helplines and websites specifically for them:

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
Shout Free, confidential support via text, available 24/7	Text SHOUT to 85258 in the UK to text with a trained crisis volunteer who'll provide active listening and collaborative problem-solving
The Mix Free confidential telephone helpline and online service that aims to find young people the best help, whatever the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Call 0808 808 4994 for free (11am to 11pm daily)● Access the online community● Email The Mix
ChildLine Confidential telephone counselling service for any child with a problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Call 0800 1111 any time for free● Have an online chat with a counsellor (9am to midnight daily)● Check out the message boards


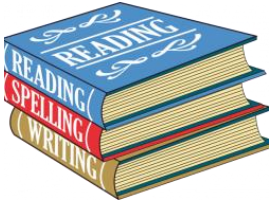
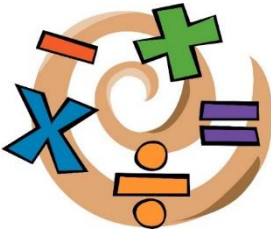

How to make home learning work for your family

We are realistic about what pupils will be able to do during this period, and we want you to be too.

You are not expected to become teachers and your children are not expected to learn as they do in school. Simply providing them with some structure at home will help them to adapt.

We have created a suggested timetable for your children to follow throughout the week.

Please see the following page.

<p>9:00am-10:00am</p>	<p>Independent Reading Activity</p> <p>Choose from the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerated Reader https://ukhosted43.renlearn.co.uk/2171850/ • Newsround https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround • Oxford owl https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk <p>Reading a book of your choice.</p>	
<p>10am-11am</p>	<p>English</p> <p>Reading Comprehension</p> <p>Writing Task of your choice- see Literacy Company ideas.</p> <p>Spelling- Year group word list</p> <p>Grammar and Punctuation</p> <p>Also see website and facebook page for activities.</p>	
<p>11am-11:15am</p>	<p>Break time</p>	
<p>11:15am-12:15pm</p>	<p>Maths</p> <p>Arithmetic (+, -, x, ÷)</p> <p>Activity sheets (from school)</p> <p>Practise your times tables (TT Rockstars)</p> <p>Choose a maths website such as www.topmarks.co.uk https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem of the day https://whiterosemaths.com/resources/classroom-resources/problems/ <p>Also see website and facebook page for activities.</p>	
<p>12:15-1:15pm</p>	<p>Lunch time</p>	
<p>1:15pm-2:15pm</p>	<p>Topic</p> <p>Pick a subject you are interested in (create a fact file, report back to your family, create artwork, create a model).</p> <p>Also see website and facebook page for activities</p>	
<p>2:15pm-3:15pm</p>	<p>Mindfulness/Well-being</p> <p>Mindfulness colouring</p> <p>Play a game with family</p> <p>Learn a new recipe</p> <p>Help your younger siblings with reading, x tables etc.</p> <p>Listen to music</p> <p>Yoga https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga</p> <p>Research your favourite author/singer/footballer and write a biography about them.</p>	

Here are some other helpful tips:

- Create and stick to a routine.
- Involve your children in creating their own timetable.
- If you have more than one child at home, consider combining the timetable, so for example, they are all doing maths at the same time.
- Designate a working space if possible.
- Stick the timetable up on the wall so it is visible for your child to see.
- Give them some household tasks to complete so they feel more responsible.
- Accept they probably will spend more time on electronic devices- that is ok but you might want to set screen time limits.

It is okay not to be okay...

We all need someone to talk to sometimes. If you feel overwhelmed or at risk of abuse, there are people, you can call on for support:

Crisis and Emotional Support

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
Mental Health Foundation Provides information and support for anyone with mental health problems or learning disabilities	Website: www.mentalhealth.org.uk
Mind A mental health charity	Phone: 0300 123 3393 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm) Website: www.mind.org.uk
PAPYRUS Youth suicide prevention society	Phone: 0800 068 4141 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 10pm, and 2pm to 10pm on weekends and bank holidays) Website: www.papyrus-uk.org
Samaritans Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair	Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline) Website: www.samaritans.org.uk
SANE Emotional support, information and guidance for people affected by mental illness, their families and carers	Website: www.sane.org.uk/support
YoungMinds A charity dedicated to children's mental health	Phone: Parents' helpline 0808 802 5544 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm) Website: www.youngminds.org.uk
Cruse Bereavement Care Support for grief and bereavement	Phone: 0808 808 1677 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5pm) Website: www.cruse.org.uk

Abuse

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
NSPCC Child protection charity	Phone: 0808 800 5000 for adults concerned about a child (24-hour helpline) 0800 1111 for children (ChildLine's 24-hour helpline) Website: www.nspcc.org.uk
Refuge Advice on dealing with domestic violence	Phone: 0808 2000 247 (24-hour helpline) Website: www.refuge.org.uk
Rape Crisis	Phone: 0808 802 999 www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Anxiety

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
Anxiety UK A national charity run by people with lived experience of anxiety through information and support.	Phone: 08444 775 774 (Infoline, 9:30am-5:30pm, Mon-Fri). www.anxietyuk.org.uk
No Panic	Phone: 0844 967 4848 (Helpline, 10am-10pm, 7 days a week). www.nopanic.org.uk
OCD Action National charity focusing on obsessive-compulsive disorder.	Phone: 0845 390 6232 www.ocdaction.org.uk

Please find further support involving financial, employment and educational support in our 'Neston Primary School Help and Advice document' on our school website.