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“SMILING, CARING AND LEARNING TOGETHER ON A JOURNEY WITH GOD”

Supporting your child's wellbeing

Dear Parents and Carers,

During this difficult time we wanted to reach out to let you know that, even though our school is currently closed to all but a few children, we're still here to support your child and your family in whatever way we can.

You might be noticing signs of increasing anxiety in your child as they're spending more time indoors and outside of their normal routines.

These might include:

For pupils' ages 3-6 years:

- Regressing to behaviour they've outgrown, such as thumb-sucking or bed-wetting
- Showing greater fear at being separated from you
- Tantrums
- Trouble sleeping

For pupils' ages seven-10 years:

- Expressing sadness, anger or fear
- Sharing false information that they're hearing from their peers or seeing online
- Wanting to talk about coronavirus all the time
- Not wanting to talk about the current situation at all
- Having trouble concentrating

We have put together some resources to help you support your child. We hope you find this information helpful. If you have any concerns about how your child is coping or you need any other support from the school, please let us know by contacting us via our office@nyewoodinf.co.uk email or phoning the school.

We are extremely grateful for all the support you have shown us as we have adapted to these new circumstances, and we want to reassure you that we are still here to support you too.

We can and will get through this together!

Take care of yourself

It is 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 this 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've included a list at the end of this pack.

How to talk to your child about what is happening

No matter how calmly you manage the current environment, children are likely to be anxious, so it is important to talk to them about what is happening.

For younger children:

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.

Deal with the news head-on and talk about it openly and calmly, giving them the facts.

- 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;
- Teach them how to know if information they find on the internet is reliable. Explain how some stories on social media may be based on rumours or inaccurate information;
- Encourage them to take breaks from listening to or reading the news – overexposure isn't helpful.

Encourage questions

- This will give them the confidence to reach out, if they have anything to ask;
- Be reassuring but honest when answering questions – it's ok if you don't have all the answers;

- Be ready to answer the same question over and over – children tend to repeat themselves when they're feeling uncertain or worried, so you might have to answer the same questions more than once as they seek extra reassurance.

Be a role model

- Recognise and manage your own worries first;
- Be open about your own feelings and let them know it's normal to be concerned – for example, let them know you're also finding the news a bit worrying and what you're doing to stay calm.

Explain how our body's immune system protects us

- It is constantly working against germs without us knowing. We can't and don't need to control this process;
- Explain that we're taking precautions against this particular germ because it's a new one which our bodies haven't come across before;
- Remind them how important it is that they eat healthy food, sleep and exercise, as this helps to fight germs.
- If it helps, reassure them that the effects of this virus on healthy young people are very mild.

Keep doing your bit to help children reduce the spread of germs

- Remind them to maintain good hygiene like bathing daily and wearing fresh clothes;
- Encourage them to sing 'happy birthday' twice when they're washing their hands.

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.

The following tips are designed to help you create a positive learning environment at home. See what works best for your household.

Create and stick to a routine if you can. This is what children are used to. For example, eat breakfast at the same time and make sure they are dressed before starting the 'school' day – avoid staying in pyjamas!

- **Involve your children in setting the timetable** where possible. It's a great opportunity for them to manage their own time better and it'll give them ownership.
- **Check in with your children and try to keep to the timetable, but be flexible.** If a task/activity is going well or they want more time, let it extend where possible.
- 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.
- **Designate a working space if possible,** and at the end of the day have a clear cut-off to signal school time is over.
- **Stick the timetable up on the wall** so everyone knows what they should be doing when, and tick activities off throughout the day.
- **Take stock at the end of each week.** What is working and what isn't? Ask your children, involve them too.
- **Distinguish between weekdays and weekends,** to separate school life and home life.
- **Give them tasks** to do so they feel more responsible about the daily routine at home.
- Ask them to **help you cook** and bake.
- Accept that **they'll probably watch more TV/spend time on their phone** – that's ok but you might want to set/agree some screen time limits.

Please do not worry about your children getting behind with learning. Everyone's in the same boat and, when things get back to normal, we will make sure we get everyone back on track.

Where to find learning resources online

There's plenty of support for parents online for everything from tools for home learning to PE:

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
Nyewood CE Infant Blogs We have been putting together learning for your children to do at home.	Website: https://www.nyewoodinf.co.uk/
BBC Bitesize Online resource for learning and revision. Starting on 20 April, you'll also find daily lessons to support home learning	Website: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize
GoNoodle Movement and mindfulness videos for primary children	Website: https://www.gonoodle.com/
STEM.org.uk Free home learning resources for all ages in science, technology, engineering and maths	Website: https://www.stem.org.uk/home-learning
Twinkl This popular site for teachers is now offering free daily activities for home learning	Website: https://www.twinkl.co.uk/home-learning-hub
English National Ballet Free ballet classes streamed daily	Website: https://www.youtube.com/user/enballet

Where to turn to for help

It's okay to not be okay. We all need someone to talk to sometimes. If you feel overwhelmed, at risk of abuse or experiencing financial need, there are people you can call on for support:

Mental health

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

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
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

Domestic violence

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

Community support

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
Grandad's Front Room (community support shop)	07453 813413
Bognor food bank	01243 866952
Community hub	0330 222 7980 (lines are open 8am-8pm) Or see West Sussex website – www.westsussex.gov.uk
Carers Support West Sussex	info@carerssupport.org.uk www.carerssupport.org.uk 0300 028 8888 Response line is open Mon – Fri 9.00-5.00pm, Wednesday 9.00-7.00pm and Saturday 10.00-12.00