

Scoil Náisiúnta na hInse

Ennis National School

Website: www.ennisns.ie

Twitter: Ennis National School @ennisns

Parent Information Pack

School Closure 2020



Covid-19 School Closure 2020



Ennis National School

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Our WELLBEING hand



Introduction

1. Introduction

As a school community we find ourselves in uncharted waters at a time in which the entire world is imperfectly adjusting to a new reality. Your constitutional role as the primary educator of your child has taken on a new dimension as a result of the circumstances we now find ourselves in. We will work together, in partnership, to support our pupils learning bearing in mind the constraints placed upon us all.

Structure and routine at home will be essential for our pupils during our closure. We have included a **Daily Routine for Pupils** in this pack as a suggestion as to how pupils may use their time productively. The schedule can be adapted to suit family circumstances but it is highly recommended that some form of daily routine is established.

The work teachers will assign to pupils is for the most part about consolidating what our pupils have learned to date, developing skills and dispositions already embedded. We want to give our pupils a sense of connectedness with their teachers and with our wonderful school while providing a realistic amount of mental stimulus.

I am conscious that you are being inundated with information and details of websites and resources available. My advice, access and use what you can, when you can, choose one or two that the children like and go with those. Online learning represents a small percentage of the opportunities that exist for our pupils. Seize whatever opportunities you can manage to talk, play, cook, laugh, cry and engage with your kids over the coming weeks.

As a school community we are acutely aware of the varying circumstances families will find themselves in in the coming days and weeks. Work assigned by teachers must not be an additional source of stress in any household. Individual pupils and families may complete assigned work to whatever extent that family circumstances dictate. Do what you can do, and, whatever you do, do not let it be a source of stress or conflict in your household.

Our priority concern is that all members of our school community remain safe and healthy during these difficult times. We really look forward to welcoming our pupils back to school at whatever point current circumstances allow.

Kind regards
Brian Troy
Principal

2. What to expect in the weeks to come.




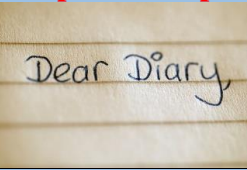

1. Each weekend in advance of a school week that the school is closed to pupils your child's class teacher/SET teacher will e mail you a pack of work to be completed the following week. The work will mostly focus on the core areas of Literacy and Numeracy along with some other assignments. Naturally it is up to each family to decide how much is done each day dependent on personal circumstances.
2. The class teacher/SET teacher will provide recommendations of what should be covered and it is very much up to you as your children's primary educator what gets covered. Once again, I want to make it clear that this work should not be an additional source of stress.
3. If you feel your child is having difficulty with a particular piece of work assigned in literacy or numeracy please bring this to the attention of the class teacher via e mail.

Please only forward emails to teacher's work e mails from 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday.

4. Daily Diary – another **optional** activity for your child is to keep a daily diary. Your child could write, draw and take a picture to put in the diary. This will be a wonderful way for your child to record their memories and activities during this exceptional time.
5. General school queries can be submitted via e mail to info@ennisns.ie
6. Voicemails left on the school phone (065 6829158) will be monitored each week.

3. Daily routine for pupils

Do as many activities as possible with your brothers and sisters. Work together and be kind to each other! Tidy up after activities and meal times and help your family.

TIME OF DAY	ACTIVITY
<p>8.30am to 10.45am</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash, dress and have a healthy breakfast. Tidy up after yourself and make sure to wash your teeth and make your bed. 2. Go outside and do 20 minutes of any activity you like. 3. Complete work given by your teacher.
<p>Mid-Morning Break 10.45am to 11.00am</p>	<p>Have a healthy snack. Be sure to tidy up after yourself.</p>
<p>11.00am to 12 noon</p> 	<p>School On TV Turn on RTE 1 and watch the programme School On TV. This is a cross platform initiative launched by RTE with the support of the Department of Education.</p>
<p>12.00noon to 12.45pm</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go outside and observe the changes around you in nature. Make a record of these by drawing or taking a picture. Tidy the garden. See Home Learning Activities for other ideas. 2. Listen to your favourite song and sing/dance make a list of favourite songs with family members and take a turn every day playing one.
<p>Lunch Break 12.45pm to 1.15pm</p>	<p>Have a look at the Food Pyramid and help make a healthy lunch. Make sure to tidy up after yourself.</p>
<p>1.15pm to 2.00pm</p> 	<p>Daily Diary Write your daily diary. Draw or take a picture to go with what you write. Details of restrictions, illustrations, photos of the local environment etc.. can all be included.</p>
<p>2.00pm to 2.45pm</p> 	<p>Shared and Independent Reading Use this time to enjoy the pleasure of reading independently or with family members.</p>

4. Online Resources

We are acutely aware of the varying levels of internet and device access that pupils have in their homes. We have selected what we feel are some of the more useful websites and have limited the number we are providing as the amount of sites is endless.

It is the responsibility of each parent to establish the suitability of the content of each website for their child/children. Parents must review websites in full and age appropriate supervision is advised.

Essential Resources



Pupils can access their Accelerated Reader account with their username on login details. The site can be accessed through the link below or through the school website

<https://www.ennisns.ie/resources/#learning-websites>

<https://ukhosted11.renlearn.co.uk/2935049/>



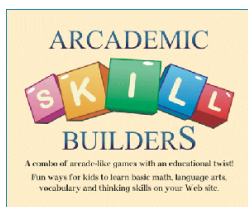
Pupils can access their Mathletics account with their username on login details. The site can be accessed through the link below or through the school website
<https://www.ennisns.ie/resources/#learning-websites>

<https://www.mathletics.com/uk/>

scoilnet

Scoilnet is the Department of Education and Skills (DES) official portal for Irish education. The website is managed by the PDST on behalf of the DES. It provides an abundance of resources, ideas and activities in all curricular areas.

<https://www.scoilnet.ie/>



ARCADEMIC SKILL BUILDERS is a website featuring games that can help first through sixth graders practice math, language arts, and critical-thinking skills.

<https://www.arcademics.com/>

General Resources



Twinkl are offering all parents and teachers a One Month FREE Ultimate Membership to Twinkl.ie. This will allow parents and teachers unlimited access to every single resource for every single curriculum subject from junior infants to sixth class.

www.twinkl.ie/offer

Notes: Setting this up is really easy to do - go to www.twinkl.ie/offer and enter the code IRLTWINKLHELPS. This code will only work for new memberships. If you are an existing member with a Core or Extra membership, please get in touch and they will upgrade you to Ultimate right away.



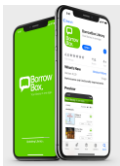
Amazing Educational Resources provides links to a huge range of educational resources covering many curricular areas.

<http://www.amazingeducationalresources.com/>

Other Useful Resources

Literacy

BorrowBox



If you or your child/children are a member of the local library, you can access an App or website called BorrowBox. It is free.

<https://www.borrowbox.com/>

Notes: To register, you need your library card which has your membership number on the back.

VOOKS

Vooks is committed to being a resource for families to keep kids reading at home. Vooks can also be a welcome distraction for parents, allowing them to enjoy time with their kids, watching and discussing books together. To help, we have created take-home lesson plans that can be shared with parents and guardians - built to provide children with 20 minutes a day of read aloud time and activities.

<https://www.vooks.com/>

Notes: Free one month, sign up required



]Oxford Owl has an e-book library with over 250 books in it and offers free access to teachers and parents once you create an account at www.oxfordowl.co.uk They also have some vocabulary and comprehension activities for most of the books.

Scéal an lae (Story of the day) Short stories in Gaeilge read aloud online.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Sc%C3%A9al+an+lae

Anam an Amhrán – Youtube Various songs in Gaeilge

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Anam+an+Amhr%C3%A1n

TGLurgan Songs in Gaeilge

<https://www.youtube.com/user/tglurgan>

Scholastic

Scholastic Learn at home provides day to day projects (USA based) for children from Infants to Sixth Class.

<https://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/learnathome.html>



Any science experiment you could ever think of is nicely organised into lots of different sections and are available in English and Irish. Much of the equipment you can find at home but well worth exploring to try and do a science experiment every few days.

<https://www.sfi.ie/engagement/discover-primary-science-and-maths/activities-search/>

GoNoodle



GoNoodle is an excellent resource to get pupils of all ages active and moving and best of all it's free!

<https://www.gonoodle.com/>

5. Accessing publishers websites

Publishers are giving free access to online schoolbooks during the Covid 19 closures. See details of how to access these below.

Folens's <https://www.folens.ie/>



Dear Teacher,

To lend a helping hand to schools and parents over the coming weeks we are giving access to all our digital resources on FolensOnline.ie.

Parents and teachers can follow the steps below to get access:

1. Go to [FolensOnline.ie](https://www.folens.ie/) and click register
2. Select Teacher
3. Fill in a username, email and password
4. For Roll Number use the code: **Prim20**

NOTE for Teachers: if you already have an account on FolensOnline but want to access all our resources simply create a new account with a different email address.

CJ Fallon <https://www.cjfallon.ie/>

Important Notice

In order to help during the COVID-19 crisis, CJ Fallon is now providing FREE access to its online books until the end of this school term.

This access applies to all teachers, students and parents.

As of today, in response to the COVID-19 crisis, teachers, parents and pupils can access the online versions of all CJ Fallon books for free. Simply click [here](#) and filter to your required title.

If you would prefer to access these directly, visit <http://my.cjfallon.ie>, click 'Student Resources', then filter to the title you require, making sure 'Online Book' is selected under 'Resources'.

Kind regards, and stay safe.
CJ Fallon



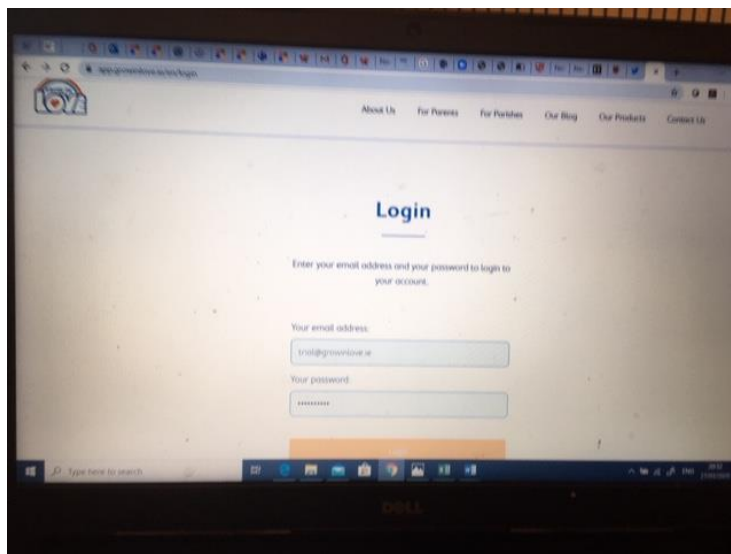
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This email has been sent to you, as << Test Email Address >> is associated with an account with CJ Fallon. Should you no longer wish to receive newsletters, please unsubscribe [here](#). If you would like to update your preferences, click [here](#).

Grow In Love <https://app.growinlove.ie/en/login>

Username: trial@growinlove.ie

Password: growinlove



EdCo <https://www.edco.ie/>

In an effort to provide a solution to make it as easy as possible for every student, teacher and parent to access our Primary, Junior and Leaving Cert e-books, we have created three free accounts which you can use to access everything you need to keep you going over the coming weeks.

Log in using any of the details below on www.edcolearning.ie or [CLICK HERE](#)



Level	Username	Password
Primary	primaryedcobooks	edco2020
Junior Cert	jcedcobooks	edco2020
Leaving Cert	icedcobooks	edco2020

Edco

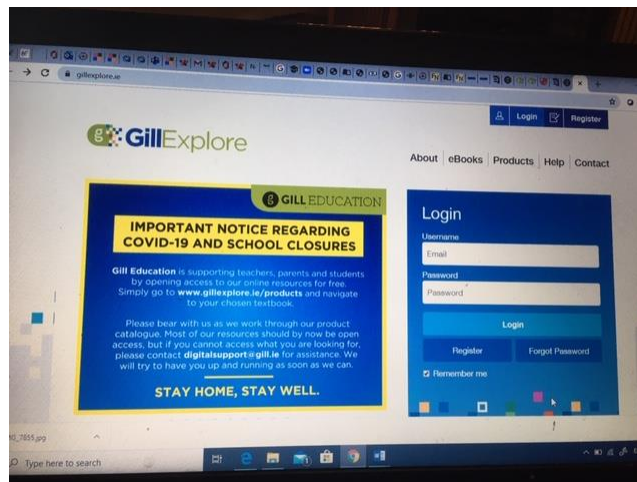
Prim Ed <https://www.prim-ed.ie/>



Educate.ie <https://educate.ie/>



Gill and McMillan <https://www.gillexplore.ie/>



6. List of Books and Publishers.

CJ Fallon

6th Class

Maths – Mathemagic 6

Irish – Bun Go Barr 6

English – Spellbound

History/Geography/Science – Small World

5th Class

Maths – Mathemagic 5

Irish – Bun go Barr 5, Leigh sa Bhaile – Leabhar E

English - A Way With Words 5 , Starry Links Matter of Fact , Starry Links Stories & Poetry , My Read at Home 5

History and Geography – Geography Quest and History Quest

4th Class

Maths – Mathemagic 4

English – My Read at Home 4

Irish – Bun go Barr 4

3rd Class

Maths – Figure It Out 3

English – My Read at Home 3

2nd Class

Maths – Busy at Maths 2

1st Class

Maths - Busy at Maths 1

History/Geography/Science – Small World – First Class

Folens

6th Class

Irish - Am Don Léamh 6

English – Reading Zone – Smart Ice Cream

3rd Class

English – Reading Zone – Talking Horse

2nd Class

English - Starlight 2nd Combined Reading & Skills Book

1st Class

English - All write now 1st Class

EDCO

4th Class

History/Geography - Window on the World

3rd Class

Irish - Bua na Cainte 3

History/Geography - Window on the World

2nd Class

Irish - Bua na Cainte 2

English – Exercise Your English 2, BBA – Keep Going Core Book 1, BBA - Clickety Click Core Book 2, BBA – Jasper Goes on Holiday

History/Geography/Science - Window on the World Activity Book 2

1st Class

Irish – Bua na Cainte 1

Senior Infants

Irish – Bua na Cainte B

English - BBA – Oh No Zeb!, BBA – Danny to the Rescue, BBA – What a Box

Prim Ed

2nd Class

English – My Spelling Workbook C

Educate.ie

Junior Infants

English – Just Phonics

1st Class

English – Better English 1st Class

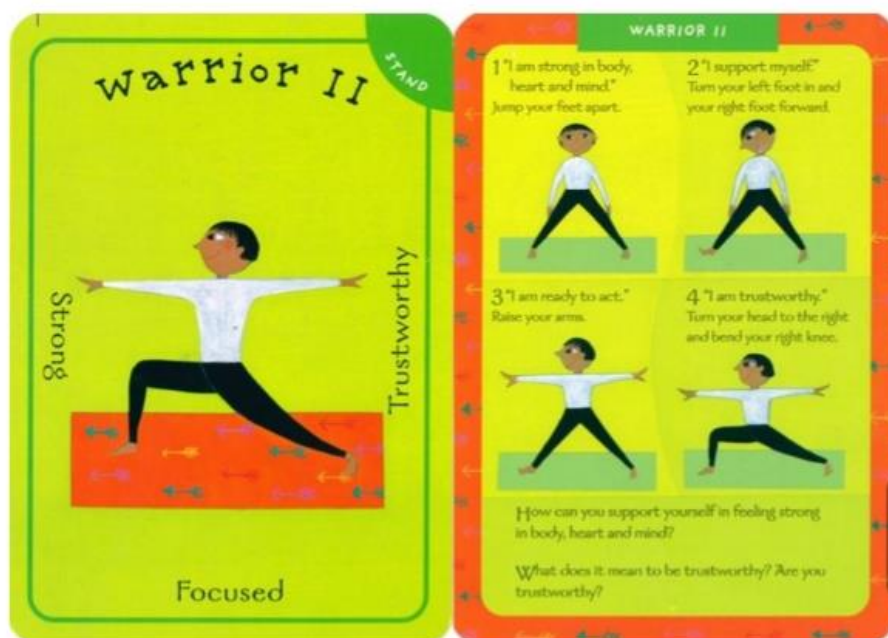
Maths – Work It Out

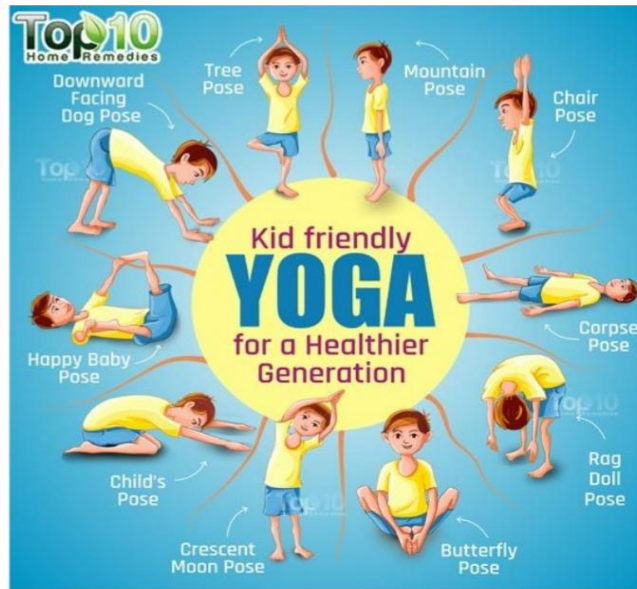
Gill and McMillian

Senior Infants

Maths – Cracking Maths

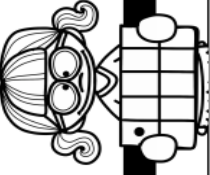
7. Some simple YOGA exercises to do inside or outside.





8. Home Learning Activities

The following pages contain home learning activities that will provide endless opportunities for pupils to fill their day. If you get to the end, START AGAIN!



1 HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES

COLOUR EACH BLOCK WHEN YOU COMPLETE THE ACTIVITY

Offer to help cooking the dinner / setting the table / cleaning up	Go on a short walk and point out 5 signs of nature	Read a short story book to a younger sibling / family member	Make a card for a neighbour or relative
Listen to your favourite song. Do jumping jacks the whole time the chorus plays	Think about 3 things goals you have for this month. Write them down and keep them somewhere safe.	Call / text / write a short note to someone and thank them for something they did to help you this year	Look at the TV guide. Choose a movie or program to watch and write a short review afterwards.
Play outside for 30 minutes!	Play a song and do 10 burpees + 10 sit ups taking 30 second breaks between each round	Think about your favourite memory. Write a short paragraph and draw a picture to accompany it	Design and draw your own adventure centre. Write descriptions and label each room



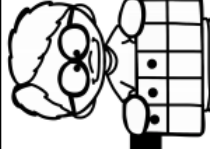
HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES

COLOUR EACH BLOCK WHEN YOU COMPLETE THE ACTIVITY

Draw your favourite animal. Write a short fact file!	Go for a walk. Wave to everyone you pass!	Read a short story book or two chapters of a book.	Make some junk art using recyclable rubbish! (cereal boxes / toilet roll holders)
Design a solution to the remote control going missing	Write a shopping list. Ask someone in your family to help. Estimate how much each item will cost!	Write a letter to a relative or neighbour. Tell them about your day and what you're looking forward to doing tomorrow.	Watch a movie tonight. Tomorrow, call or text your friend and tell them three reasons why they should or shouldn't watch it.
Clean out a drawer or cupboard in your room!	Play a song and do 20 burpees + 20 jumping jacks taking 30 second breaks between each round.	ABC Scavenger Hunt - Write the alphabet. Find things around the house that start with each letter.	Design and draw a treehouse!



HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES



COLOUR EACH BLOCK WHEN YOU COMPLETE THE ACTIVITY

Gather three objects and draw a still life picture	Go for a walk. Take pictures of some plants or trees and try to identify them later.	Write a short poem. Every line must start with the letter F	Write a diary entry from the perspective of a pet at home at the minute
Look up a yoga for kids episode on YouTube. Take some time to relax and enjoy some exercise!	Design a spaceship and label each part. Explain how it works.	Research a recipe that you would like to make. Write a shopping list for any ingredients that you don't already have in your kitchen	Build a boat out of tin foil. Count how many coins you can hold in it and try to beat your own score
Create a comic strip showing the beginning, middle and end of a story!	Find an exercise video for kids online! (Go Noodle)	Research a country or animal. Call or text a friend or relative and tell them five facts about your topic!	Go on a shape hunt around your house or garden. Write a list of objects for each shape!

Home Learning Log

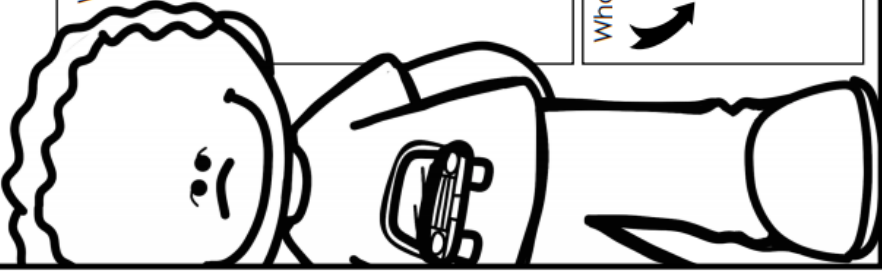
Number of activities completed:

How are you feeling today?

Name:

What was your favourite activity and why?

What activities are you looking forward to doing next?



Home Learning Log

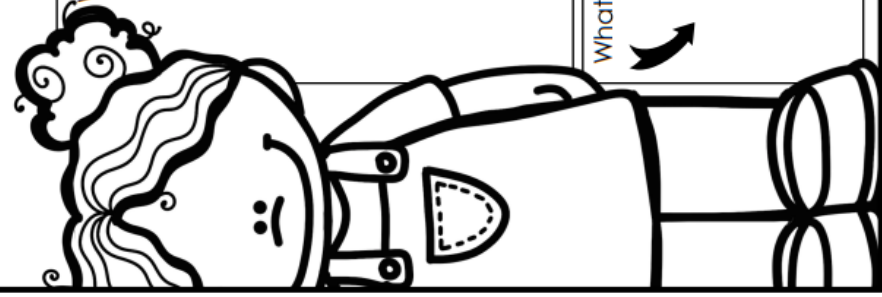
Number of activities completed:

How are you feeling today?

Name:

What was your favourite activity and why?

What activities are you looking forward to doing next?





Home Learning Activity Notebook

9. Why not take the LEGO 30 day challenge. You don't have to have LEGO, just use your own bits and pieces that you can find at home.

LEGO CHALLENGE CALENDAR
 31 Days of Fun Ideas for Any Month!

   **LITTLE BINS**
 @LITTLEBINS

DAY 1 Build Your Name or Initials	DAY 2 Build a Person With Moving Legs and Arms	DAY 3 Build a Catapult	DAY 4 Build a Robot	DAY 5 Build a House That Opens	DAY 6 Build a Boat That Floats	DAY 7 Build a 100 Brick Tower
DAY 8 Build a Box With a Lid	DAY 9 Build a Small World Scene	DAY 10 Write a Comic Strip for a Minifigure	DAY 11 Build a Model of Your Room	DAY 12 Build a Simple Machine	DAY 13 Build a Bridge That Can Hold Something Heavy	DAY 14 Build a Favorite Character
DAY 15 Make a Mosaic Using Flat Pieces On Baseplate	DAY 16 Draw a Design Make it with LEGO Bricks	DAY 17 Build Something To Go With A Favorite Book	DAY 18 Build a swimming pool for a minifigure	DAY 19 Build With Eyes Closed 5 Minutes	DAY 20 Build a Pyramid	DAY 21 Build a Marble Run
DAY 22 Draw a Play Mat and Add LEGO	DAY 23 Learn Paper Football and Build a Goal	DAY 24 Have a Minifigure Building Race	DAY 25 Build a Marble Maze	DAY 26 Try to Sink a Minifigure	DAY 27 Build a Zip Line	DAY 28 Make Your Own LEGO Skittles Game
DAY 29 Build a Parachute for a Minifigure	DAY 30 Build a Car Attach a Marker and Draw!	DAY 31 Ask For a Bin of Soapy Water Wash LEGO!				

10. Department of Education and Skills guidance and advice.

Talking to children and young people about Covid-19



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills

Talking to Children and Young People about COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Advice for Parents and Schools

- Children and young people need factual, age appropriate information about the virus and concrete instruction about how to avoid spreading of the virus. Without the facts, they often imagine situations far worse than reality. See <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/coronavirus.html>
- Let the child/young person's questions and their age guide as to how much information to provide:
 - **Very young children** need brief, simple information and reassurance that they are safe and that the people they care about are safe. They may ask *Will I get sick? Will granny/grandad die?*
 - Reassure them that the Government is working hard to ensure that people throughout the country stay healthy.
 - Explain that at the present moment very few people in this country are sick with the virus.
 - Tell them that not everyone will get the virus and that the vast majority who get it recover fully.
 - **Older children** may need help to separate reality from rumour and fantasy. Either provide or direct them to where they can find accurate, and factual information about the current status of COVID-19. Having such knowledge can help them feel a sense of control.
- Children can feel less anxious and more in control when given guidance on what they can do to prevent infection. Give them this information. Further information is available [here](#).
- The posters overleaf are available at this link. There is also a link to a video the Deputy Chief Medical Officer answered some common questions for RTÉ Junior's News 2Day programme [here](#).



- Children and young people look to the adults in their lives to guide them on how to react to worrying and stressful events. If the adults in their lives seem overly worried, their own anxiety may rise.
 - If they are anxious, let them talk about their feelings and guide them in reframing their thoughts and concerns to a more helpful way of thinking.
 - Give them extra attention and time, to talk about their concerns, fears, and questions.
 - Remember they do not always talk about their concerns readily. Watch for clues that they may want to talk, such as hovering around while you do the dishes etc.
 - It is very typical for younger children to ask a few questions, return to playing and then come back with further questions.
- Reassure children and young people that many stories about COVID-19 on the internet may be based on rumours and inaccurate information.
 - Remember factual information about the virus can help reduce anxiety.
 - Avoid constantly monitoring or discussing updates on the status of COVID -19, as this can increase anxiety.
 - Try to limit their access to information on the internet/television/social media that might be upsetting to them.
 - Remind children/young people that no individual or group is 'responsible' for the virus.
 - Remind them that they should not make negative comments about others in relation to the virus.
 - Challenge any negative comments they make or any stereotyping. Explain what negative comments mean if they are different to your values.
 - Encourage children/young people to continue with their schoolwork and extracurricular activities, but don't push them if they seem upset or overwhelmed.
 - Maintain a normal routine as much as possible, keeping to a regular schedule can be reassuring.

A guide for parents on supporting children



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills

Covid-19 (Corona Virus):

A Guide for Parents on supporting children and young people with daily routines while schools are closed

The Government has made a decision to close all schools in Ireland in order to slow down the spread of the Covid-19 virus and keep as many people as possible safe and well. We have not been in this situation before, so this is new to us all, but if we follow the right advice we will get through this, and in time we will be proud of how we responded and worked together to support our country. This decision has impacted on all of our lives and changed everyone's daily routines.

Some children and young people may be coping well with [social/physical distancing](#) and completing school work at home whereas others may be struggling with these changes. There will be challenges in the weeks ahead as your child will miss their friends, school and their extra-curricular activities. We are all in a period of adjustment and it will take time for us to adapt to being at home so much and spending more time together as families. There are things that can help you and your children to get through this challenging time.

During this time children and young people need your support to create new routines that will keep them busy and give them a sense of control of their lives. This will become more important as time goes on. Routines and schedules are key to helping them through this unprecedented phase in their lives. By having a structured and predictable day they will feel more secure and reassured.

Children and young people can help themselves to get through this time by creating a [Plan for the Day](#) every evening for the day ahead, and they may need your help with this, particularly younger children. The [Plan for the Day](#) should include where possible:

1. Normal Daily Routines
2. Physical Activities & Housework
3. Social Activities
4. Enjoyable/Creative Activities
5. Schoolwork



1. **Normal Daily Routines:** It's important to encourage your child to eat healthily, to drink lots of water and to take care of their personal hygiene.
 - Taking exercise, showering, getting dressed and getting a good night's sleep should be included in their daily routine.
 - Having regular mealtimes as a family, as well as dividing up the day, is a valuable opportunity to connect with your children and allow them to air any worries or concerns.
 - It is important to keep to the normal bedtime routine. Encourage your child to go to bed and get up at the usual time during the week. Sleep is very important for our health and wellbeing and eight to twelve hours is recommended each night.
 - Help your child have a good night's sleep by asking them to leave their devices (phone/laptop/tablet) outside of their bedroom each night.
(Remind your child to discuss their plan with you to make sure access to the computer and access to the shower, work for everyone in the family.)
2. **Physical activity & housework:** Physical activity is important for children and young people's health and wellbeing. Helping others makes us feel good and gives us a sense of purpose. Consider encouraging the following:
 - Timetabling physical exercise into each day. Your child may already have an exercise routine or preferred physical activity. If they don't or are looking for something new, there are lots of ways to exercise, for example, going for a walk or run/doing weights/jumping on a trampoline/following an exercise routine on line or by using an App.
 - Your child may be spending more time in their bedroom so encourage them to take pride in their personal space by taking responsibility for how it looks, they can do this by, making their bed/vacuuming their room/keeping their space clean and tidy.
 - Helping with the extra housework (empty and load the dishwasher/vacuum/ help with the shopping/cooking/washing & ironing/mow the lawn/wash & vacuum the car).
3. **Social activity:** Many young people are finding it hard to practice social/physical distancing from their friends. Encourage them to use technology to stay in touch with friends, and if they absolutely have to meet they need to be told to stay **two metres apart**. The Government really needs your support with this.
 - You can encourage other types of social contact by supporting them to:
 - Telephone relatives, family or neighbours who may be lonely or live alone
 - Spend time with the family watching TV together, playing board games/ making a jigsaw or helping with the housework
 - Help a younger brother or sister with their schoolwork



4. Enjoyable/creative activities, should also be included in the *Plan for the Day*:

- Using the time to try something new or learn a new hobby. Technology/ YouTube can be helpful when learning something new.
- Encouraging your child to try a crossword, draw, paint, write or listen to music.
- Encouraging your child to capture each day by documenting it through drawing, writing, recording or photography
- Write/email a letter to a friend, relative or elderly neighbour.
- Watch a favourite TV programme.
- Share and enjoy fun TikToks with friends.
- Prepare a meal. Bake a cake.
- Read a book.

5. Schoolwork:

- For post primary students it may be helpful if their new schoolwork routine on weekdays mirrors the normal school day, as much as possible. One option may be to follow the order of subjects as they appear on their usual school timetable. Another option may be to take a short break after what is the usual length of a class period in school. Some schools are using technology to support students with their schoolwork. If your child's school is doing this, you may need to remind them to check their email regularly.
- Primary school children are usually engaged in 'active learning' when they are in school, which means that they move and change tasks frequently throughout the day. Break up the schoolwork routine with physical activities and creative/ enjoyable activities. Look out for emails or messages from your child's school/teacher. They may be able to provide some helpful support during this time.
- Sticking to a full schoolwork timetable will not work for everyone. Insisting on one may lead to heightened stress and tension at home, particularly if you have a number of school-going children. Be flexible and sensible. What's important is that your child makes a good effort each day to complete some schoolwork.



Ten Useful Tips for Parents

1. Younger children may respond well to setting up routines and taking your advice and guidance while older children may resist having a ***Plan for the Day***. Remind them that this is still the school term and schoolwork is continuing. **Talk to them about the importance of routine for their health and wellbeing at this time, as well as the importance of keeping up with the curriculum, in preparation for their return to school.**
2. Remind yourself that having to work independently without the stimulus and interaction of teachers and peers is new for your children and may be challenging. While it may be important to support your child to engage with learning at home by using technology, it's not and cannot be exactly the same for your child as learning in school. Your child is likely to be less focused and attentive than they would be in school. **If this is the case, consider helping them to start small and increase their study/schoolwork time gradually. Encourage them to take short breaks between study blocks.**
3. It may be stressful for parents and carers of younger children if they believe that they have to be a 'substitute teacher'. Remember you are not a teacher and there is no expectation that you should be doing extensive hours of tutoring or completing schoolwork with your child every day. **Be realistic and sensible about your child's needs and your own, during this time. Be flexible and open to adjusting to both your needs and your child's needs – do what you can!**
4. **If you have older children in the house encourage them to help their young siblings and build this in to their *Plan for the Day*.**
5. **Remember that learning isn't just about sitting with a pen and paper at a desk. Children can learn through baking, gardening or other activities of interest to you or your family.** For example, baking can involve reading the recipe, following written instructions, learning about weight and measurement and the development of life skills, such as how to clean up after yourself, how to share and how to take turns.
6. As you know every child is different and you may find that your individual children respond to this situation in different ways. That's ok. **If needed, try to support them individually to adjust their schedules depending on their age, additional needs, motivation etc.**
7. **No matter what age, allow your children choices in relation to their *Plan for the Day*.** Choosing the activities and the order in which they engage with



those activities will be motivating and empowering for your child.

8. If your child's first few attempts at the **Plan for the Day** have not worked, remember this is a time of learning and adjusting so it may take time to get it right. **At the end of each day, your child may want to discuss with you what worked well about the plan and what was challenging. Help them to think about how it could be improved for the next day.**
9. For many children and young people it may be difficult to stay motivated and focused when working alone at home. This is normal. The *Plan for the Day* will help. **Encourage them to take regular breaks and praise and reward them for working hard and trying their best.** You may need to consider building in a reward or incentive system in order to help them experience success learning at home. Rewards don't have to cost money and can be daily or weekly depending on the age of the child. Examples include choosing a game for the family to play, having their favourite meal for dinner, choosing a family movie or extra phone or PlayStation time etc.
10. This may be a challenging time for families. **Be patient and kind with yourself.** If you can, take breaks during your day, get plenty of sleep, connect with friends and family using social media, exercise and eat well. Remember that the most important thing that you can do is love and care for your child and reassure them that Covid-19 will pass.

Check out these websites (list is not exhaustive):

- o [HSE](#)
- o [Department of Education and Skills](#)
- o https://twitter.com/@Education_Ire
- o [Department of Health](#)
- o [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#)
- o [National Parents Council Primary & Early Years](#)
- o [National Parents Council - Post Primary](#)
- o www.spunout.ie
- o www.youth.ie
- o [Jigsaw](#)
- o [Little Things Campaign](#)

Relaxation Techniques



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Education and Skills

Relaxation Techniques

Mindfulness Exercise

Mindfulness is the process of bringing one's attention to the present moment. This is a simple mindfulness technique.

- Choose an object (it can be anything) from your immediate environment
- Focus on watching it for a minute or two
- Don't do anything except notice the thing you are looking at
- Simply relax into a harmony for as long as your concentration allows
- Look at it as if you are seeing it for the first time
- Visually explore every aspect of its shape
- Allow yourself to connect with its energy and its role and purpose

Muscular Relaxation

Tense and relax different muscle groups in your body. As your body relaxes, so will your mind. You can combine deep breathing with progressive muscle relaxation for an additional level of stress relief.

Tense-Hold-Relax

- Right foot, then left foot
- Right calf, then left calf
- Right thigh, then left thigh
- Hips and buttocks
- Stomach
- Chest
- Back
- Right arm and hand, then left arm and hand
- Neck and shoulders
- Face

¹ An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Síeolaíochta Oideachais
National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)



Deep Breathing Exercises

Breathing exercises help reduce feelings of arousal and physical tension. The key to deep breathing is to breathe deeply from the abdomen, getting as much fresh air as possible into your lungs. When you take deep breaths from the abdomen, rather than shallow breaths from your upper chest, you inhale more oxygen. The more oxygen you get, the less tense, short of breath, and anxious you feel.

Example 1:

- Sit in a comfortable position with your arms and legs uncrossed.
- Inhale slowly through your nose or mouth (one-thousand one, one thousand, two, one-thousand three), and fill your lungs.
- Silently and gently say to yourself, *"I'm filling my body with calm"*.
- Exhale slowly through your mouth (one-thousand one, one-thousand two, one-thousand three), and comfortably empty your lungs.
- Silently and gently say to yourself, *"I'm letting the tension drain away"*.
- Repeat five times slowly.

Example 2:

- Sit comfortably with your back straight. Put one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach.
- Breathe in through your nose. The hand on your stomach should rise. The hand on your chest should move very little.
- Exhale through your mouth, pushing out as much air as you can while contracting your abdominal muscles.
- The hand on your stomach should move in as you exhale, but your other hand should move very little.
- Continue to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- Try to inhale enough so that your lower abdomen rises and falls. Count slowly as you exhale.



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Visualisation

Close your eyes and use your imagination to imagine that you are walking down a soft wide path towards the ocean. As you walk you feel calm and safe – breathing in and out – calmly and deeply.

You can hear the waves rolling onto the beach. You can smell the ocean. You can feel a beautiful cooling breeze on your face. As you continue along the path - breathing in and out – slowly and deeply – you feel the sand beneath your feet – it's soft and warm. The sun is shining and the sea is blue and glistening. The sound of the waves rolling onto the beach feels comforting and relaxing. And as you look out at the sea you can match your breathing to the pattern of the waves – slowly in and deeply out– relaxed and happy. You can feel the sun's warmth filling the whole of your body as you gaze towards the water which is bright and blue and green. The beach is golden, long and wide and there is no-one here but you. This is your beach – your place – your time.

Breathing in, filling your body with warmth and relaxation and breathing out – letting go of any stress. As you continue to breathe slowly and deeply, lower yourself onto the sand. Sitting here quietly you can watch the waves lapping onto the beach – the water is clear and bright and as you watch you continue to feel the warm relaxing feeling flowing over you – and you feel safe and happy and content.

There is no-one here but you – this is your beach – this is your place – this is your time. Sitting here in the warm, soft sand, soaking up the sunshine you feel strong and calm and you feel ready to return. Breathing in and out ...slowly and deeply.

Body Focus

Take a deep breath and close your eyes for a few moments. Sense where your body is in contact with the environment around you (chair, floor etc.). Sense where your weight is resting. Now take another deep breath and move your body in some way to get more comfortable and relaxed. Are there any parts of your body that feel very tense or sore? If you find one, take a deep breath and try to imagine that place loosening up. Then gently and slowly move that part of the body just a little bit to let it loosen and relax.



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Apple Picker Stretch

Imagine you are under the branches of an apple tree. Standing with both arms up in the air and gently bouncing on tip toes, reach up as high as you can and grab at the imaginary apples with one hand then the other. Then gently drop your hands and bend over towards the floor as far as you can with knees slightly bent. Then sway gently from side to side for a few moments before slowly rising up, one vertebra at a time, with the neck and head coming up very last. (Remember to keep breathing).

Advice for young people



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Department of
Education and Skills

COVID-19 (Coronavirus): Advice for Young People while Schools are Closed

Stay Responsible & Informed
Stay Active & Connected
Stay Positive & Calm

The Government has made a decision to close all schools in Ireland in order to slow down the spread of the Covid-19 virus in Ireland and keep as many people as possible safe and well. We have not been in this situation before, so this is new to us all, but if we follow the right advice we will get through this, and in time we will be proud of how we responded, working together to support our country. You have a part to play in this. Some of you may be ready to take on the challenge of social/physical distancing and doing schoolwork at home, some of you may be bored and fed up and others may be feeling worried or anxious about what these changes may mean. We are all adjusting and adapting. When trying to think about how you can support yourself, your family, your community and your country in the coming weeks, remember these three key messages:

Stay Responsible & Informed
Stay Active & Connected
Stay Positive & Calm

1. Stay Responsible & Informed:

- Follow the HSE advice on their website (see link at end) on protecting yourself, practicing social/physical distancing and on ways to avoid spreading the virus.
- Keep up-to-date with information posted on the Department of Education & Skills' Twitter account (see link at end).
- Without the facts, we may believe rumours and imagine situations far worse than reality. Stick to reliable, trustworthy sources of information such as the HSE, the Department of Health, the Department of Education and Skills, the World Health Organisation (see links at end) and trustworthy mainstream news sources, such as RTE.



- Take breaks from the news and social media as this makes us less vulnerable to 'fake news' and limits our exposure to unhelpful or inaccurate information.
- Remember that the Government is working hard to ensure that people throughout the country stay healthy and safe.
- Remember, too, that not everyone will get the virus and the vast majority who get it will recover fully. At times like this we all need to support each other:
 - Be kind and look out for each other.
 - Remember no individual or group is 'responsible' for the virus.
 - Making negative comments about others in relation to the virus is not helpful, it's important to challenge your friends and family if they are doing this.
 - If people you know get the virus remember that it's not their fault. They have been unlucky and need our support.

2. Stay Active & Connected

Routines and schedules are the key to getting through this new phase of our lives. Making our days structured and predictable will help us feel secure and reassured. Schools have closed and this has changed our regular daily routines. During this time of Covid-19 let's create new routines. Keeping busy, having a sense of purpose and feeling in control of our time is very important.

You can help yourself get through this time by creating a **Plan for the Day**, every evening for the day ahead (see link at end).



Following your normal school day can be your guide. Don't forget to discuss your plan with your family to make sure that your scheduling of mealtimes, showering, computer time etc. works for everyone in the house. When you are creating your plan think about the following:

- **Include some basic daily activities:** Sleep is good for your health and wellbeing so it's important to get plenty of sleep - eight to twelve hours is recommended for young people. Leaving your phone/laptop/tablet outside of your bedroom will help you to get a good night's sleep. It's also important to eat healthily, to drink lots of water and to take care of personal hygiene. Aim to include sleep, taking exercise, showering and getting dressed into your daily routine.
- **Include some physical activity & housework:**
 - Going for a walk or run/doing weights/jumping on a trampoline/ following an exercise routine on line or by using an App
 - Tidying your room (make your bed/keep your space clean and tidy)
 - Helping with the housework (empty and load the dishwasher/mow the lawn/wash the car/vacuum/ help with the shopping/with cooking/with washing & ironing)
- **Include some social activity:**
 - We all find it hard to be away from our friends and to practice physical/social distancing. Use technology to stay in touch. If you happen to meet a friend, remember to stay **two metres apart**.
 - If you have relatives, family or neighbours who may be lonely or who live alone, why not give them a ring? Remember in particular older relatives.
 - Reconnect with your family. Find similar interests and plan to watch TV together, play board games/make a jigsaw or help with the housework together. Maybe you can help a younger brother or sister with their schoolwork.
- **Include enjoyable and creative activities:**
 - Try something new. Use YouTube to take up a new



hobby.

- Do a crossword, read, draw, paint, write or listen to music.
- Capture each day by documenting it through writing, recording or photography. Keep a journal/diary of this time. It might be something that you will really value in the future.
- Write/email a letter to a friend or relative or elderly neighbour.
- Watch a favourite TV programme.
- Share and enjoy fun TikToks with friends.
- Prepare a meal. Bake a cake.

• **Include schoolwork**

- It is important that your new routine on weekdays mirrors the normal school day, as much as possible. One option may be to follow the order of subjects as they appear on your usual school timetable. Another option may be to take a short break after what is the usual length of a class period in your school.
- It is important that you make time each day to complete some schoolwork. Keep a log of what you have worked on each day.
- Some schools are using technology to support students with their schoolwork. If your school is doing this, remember to check the school website and your email regularly.
- Remember it is often hard to motivate yourself and stay focused when working alone at home. This is normal. Taking regular breaks and rewarding yourself is key to staying motivated.

3. Stay Positive & Calm

Over the next few weeks you may have lots of different feelings. It may all feel a bit unreal. We may feel anxious, sad, afraid, fed up, angry, shocked or even numb. We may feel nothing at all. This is all ok and these are all normal and healthy reactions to stressful situations, such as the Covid-19 outbreak. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to feel. If our feelings and reactions seem different from those of our friends, remember that everyone reacts differently. There are things we can do, to help, such as:



- Talk to family and friends about your feelings. Sharing our thoughts or worries with others really does help.
- Remember that there are a lot of rumours and 'fake news' going around at the moment. If you are worried about them, talk to an adult or parent.
- Get your information from a reliable source.
- Continually talking about Covid-19 or watching constant updates on it can increase your anxiety. Try to limit accessing information on the internet/ television/social media that might be upsetting to you.
- Covid-19 will pass and life will get back to normal.
- Look at this break from your normal routine as a time to pay attention to yourself and make a special effort to take care of yourself. Try to get some extra sleep, eat nutritious foods and get some exercise, even if it is just a walk.
- Practice some relaxation techniques (see link at end).
- Do something you enjoy. Think about something that makes you feel good, then make it happen – like listening to music, going for walks, doing an exercise routine, watching a funny movie. Remember laughter is good medicine!

Check out these hyperlinks:

- [Plan for the Day](#)
- [Relaxation Techniques](#)

Check out these websites, this list is not exhaustive:

- [HSE](#)
- [Social/physical distancing](#)
- https://twitter.com/@Education_Ire
- [Department of Health](#)
- [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#)
- www.spunout.ie
- www.youth.ie
- www.jigsawonline.ie
- [Little Things Campaign](#)

Plan your day



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Example of Plan for the Day

During this time of school closure, some students will have been given a structured timetable to follow by their teachers. This will vary depending on age and year group. The following is an example of a *Plan for the Day* for students who are designing their own schedules.

Remember to plan for schoolwork, physical exercise and household jobs as well as activities you enjoy, connecting with friends and family and taking some free time and food breaks throughout the day.



TIME	ACTIVITY	Tick when complete ✓
9.00	Breakfast/Wash/Dress/Get ready for school work	
10.00	Schoolwork	
11.00	Fifteen minute break – relax (healthy snack and listen to music/check phone)	
11..15	Schoolwork	
12.00	Exercise & jobs in the house	
1.00	Lunch & enjoyable activity	
2.00	Schoolwork (followed by a short break)	
3.00	Schoolwork	
4.00	Enjoyable activity & physical activity	
5.00	Enjoyable activity & jobs in the house	
6.00	Dinner time (& tidy up)	
Evening Plan	Family time & relax	

Cover your cough and sneeze poster



Coronavirus COVID-19



Coronavirus
COVID-19
Public Health
Advice

If you have fever and/or cough you should stay at home regardless of your travel or contact history.

If you have returned from an area that is subject to travel restrictions due to COVID-19 you should restrict your movement for 14 days. Check the list of affected areas on www.dfa.ie

All people are advised to:

- > **Reduce** social interactions
- > **Keep a distance** of 2m between you and other people
- > **Do not** shake hands or make close contact where possible

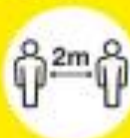
If you have symptoms visit hse.ie OR phone HSE Live **1850 24 1850**

How to Prevent



Stop

shaking hands or hugging when saying hello or greeting other people



Distance

yourself at least 2 metres (6 feet) away from other people, especially those who might be unwell



Wash

your hands well and often to avoid contamination



Cover

your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing and discard used tissue



Avoid

touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands



Clean

and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Symptoms

- + Fever (High Temperature)
- + A Cough
- + Shortness of Breath
- + Breathing Difficulties

For Daily Updates Visit

www.gov.ie/health-covid-19
www.hse.ie

Ireland is operating a delay strategy in line with WHO and ECDC advice



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland