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21st April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to a virtual new term! I hope this letter finds you and your family safe and well. I have been thinking about you all a great deal and I'm hoping that everything is going as well as it can be and you got some kind of a rest over Easter.

Now that we are clear from government that schools will not be re-opening anytime soon, I wanted to write to you to let you know what our plans are and to support you by sending some really useful documents from the DfE (see below), which are accessible by following the links in them. They will support you to help your child's learning at home, but I must stress that we all completely understand that this is not easy for everyone to do and can be a source of stress and frustration at such a tricky time. We know you want the best for your children and will do what you can, but please don't be hard on yourself if getting your child to concentrate doesn't always work out on a given day – there is always a fresh start the next time!

By now you should have received your children's new learning from their class teachers. We aim to send this out with tasks, links and instructions by email every Friday for the following week. Please let your child's teacher know if you need clarification, support or explanation of any kind. You should have their email addresses which they check regularly, but if you are having any difficulty, please email me and I will signpost you to the help you need head@forncett.norfolk.sch.uk or head@carletonrode-primary.norfolk.sch.uk I check both these often so it doesn't matter which one you use.

As you know we operate an 'open door' policy where you hopefully always feel able to approach any of us with any concerns or queries you may have. As well as setting work, we are also all here to help, advise and support you and your child/ren with anything else we can that will help your child's wellbeing, safety and development, in just the same way as we would talk together if we were at school. I am always happy to speak to you or your child via email or telephone if required as are our teachers.

I wish you well and hope that I see you all again soon. Please pass my very best wishes to your children and tell them that I really miss seeing and talking to them all and that I am really looking forward to the day we are back together again.

With best wishes,

Judith



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<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-aged-2-to-4-to-learn-at-home-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Help primary school children continue their education during coronavirus (COVID-19)

Structuring the day

Do not worry about trying to maintain a full routine for your child like they had at school. But children will feel more comfortable and learn better with a predictable routine to the day, even if this is difficult.

When schools provide children with work they may give you advice on how to structure the day. But generally, you should try to make sure that they:

- get up and go to bed at the same time each day
- have regular meal times
- have regular breaks
- make time to be active - children are used to regular play at lunch and break times

Using digital devices

Your child's school may set them work that can be done on a digital device such as a laptop, desktop, tablet or smartphone.

Set age-appropriate parental controls on any devices your child is using and supervise their use of websites and apps. See [advice on keeping them safe online](#) and talk to your child about online safety.

Reducing screen time

Digital devices are not the only way to learn. Manage screen time with a timer and break up screen time by getting your child to:

- use books and other printed materials that their school has provided or that you have at home
- write by hand – try asking them to complete work by hand, write a diary, a summary of things they have learned or done each day or 'to do' lists
- be active and get away from the screen regularly – see a selection of [physical activity resources](#) for primary school children
- stop using digital devices at least an hour before bed

Reception, year 1 and year 2 children

The best way to help children aged 4 to 7 learn is to:

- sit with them as they work
- do active and practical things, rather than trying to make them sit and listen for long periods
- try to break down the work into shorter periods, based on how long they can concentrate
- take frequent breaks
- praise or reward them when they do well

Talking

Talk with your child throughout the day and try to explain new words. For example, discuss everything you are doing and pick out words that might be new to them.



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Reading together

When you read with your child try to:

- express the emotion in the story
- give colour to the characters using voices, tone and pace
- discuss the things you are reading

You can make a story more interesting and help your child develop their understanding of a book by linking what you are reading to their life. For example, while reading about Cinderella going to the ball, talk about how a ball is similar to a birthday party.

Ask your child questions about what you are reading as you go. For example:

- ask some questions that only need a short answer, such as what colour something is, or the name of a character
- ask some questions that need a longer answer, such as how a character is feeling
- ask them to tell you what has happened in the story so far

Libraries are currently closed, but you can find digital services they are providing at [Libraries Connected](#).

Phonics

Phonics is a method schools use to teach children how to read quickly and skilfully. Contact your school, which will be working on ways to help you with this. Try to sit with your child and practise with them, following the advice you get from their school.

Writing

Try to help children to continue to practise their writing. This may include the formation of letters and familiarity with pens and pencils for younger children, or practising creative writing for older children. Ask children to write about their day-to-day experiences of being at home, or to write letters to send to family members.

Numbers

Practise counting and numbers. This does not always have to be a planned activity. For example, count things around the house while you are doing other things like cooking or cleaning.

For older children learning sums, ask your school for help or see a [list of resources to help with maths](#) recommended by teachers and school leaders.

Year 3 to 6 children

The best way to help children aged 7 to 11 learn is to:

- give them support and direction, but encourage them to do work independently too
- include active and practical things, rather than trying to make them sit and work for long periods
- try to break down the work into shorter periods, based on how long they can concentrate
- take frequent breaks
- praise or reward them when they do well

To check if they are learning try to:

- ask them questions as they go
- talk about things they learned

Talking



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Ask children to talk through what they have learned during the day and find time to talk with them more generally.

Reading

Talk to your child about what they are reading. This will help them understand what they have read and encourage them to read for fun.

Ask your child questions about what they are reading. For example:

- ask questions that make them think about the story, such as how a character is feeling
- ask them to tell you what has happened in the story so far

Libraries are currently closed, however, you can find digital services they are providing at [Libraries Connected](#).

Writing

Try to help children practise their writing. Work from school may be sent digitally, but using pen and paper will help children be ready for when they go back to school.

Information for parents of year 6 children

Year 6 children (aged 10 to 11) should continue doing any work set for them by their school. To prepare for going to secondary school this can be a good time for them to follow their own interests. For example, for:

- history, by visiting the [English Heritage](#) website to explore England's history
- geography, by researching other countries
- science, by finding out more about the human body on [BBC Bitesize](#)
- art, by trying the activities on [TATE Kids](#)

Ask your primary school about how you can help your child prepare for moving up to secondary school.

Read [advice for children of other age groups](#), and understand [which children may still attend school](#).

Published 19 April 2020

Launch of the Oak National Academy online classroom and resource hub

The sector-led Oak National Academy has today launched its online classroom and resource hub. The Academy offers 180 video lessons each week for schools to use, across a broad range of subjects. The lessons cover children in Reception through to Year 10 and are free to use by both teachers and young people.

The Oak National Academy can be accessed here:

- <https://www.thenational.academy/>

Launch of BBC Bitesize

The BBC has today launched an education package across TV and online, featuring celebrities and teachers, helping to keep children learning at home and supporting parents. BBC Bitesize can be accessed here:

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

Help children with SEND continue their education during coronavirus (COVID-19)

Advice for parents and carers looking after children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Published 19 April 2020 From: [Department for Education](#)



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Staying at home can be more disruptive to the lives and routines of children with special educational needs and disabilities.

No one expects parents to act as teachers or childcare providers, or to provide the activities and feedback that a school or nursery would. Parents and carers should do their best to help and support their children with their learning while they are at home.

If your child usually goes to school but is currently at home, their school should be working to provide them with work and giving them feedback in a format that meets their needs.

Contact the school if you are not already in touch.

We have been working with a range of other organisations to create extra resources to help you. See:

- a list of [online education resources for children with SEND](#)
 - [coronavirus educational resources](#) from The Sensory Projects
 - [SEND-specific resources for learning from home](#) from Tech Ability
- We have also worked with other organisations to create information on ways you can help your children learn at home. See:
- [advice on supporting children with a learning disability or autistic spectrum disorder \(ASD\)](#) from the Council for Disabled Children
 - [recommendations on special educational needs](#) from the Education Endowment Foundation