

Dear Parents/Carers,

When school closed last Friday we provided you with learning resources and online learning for your child which can be accessed through the website and on our Facebook page. This will continue to be updated on a regular basis. We encourage you to provide some structure for your child as many of us thrive with a clear structure. You might have started the week with high hopes of hours of learning, including online activities, science experiments, and book reports. Now, five days in, some realities may be starting to become apparent.

Please remember your child will be just as anxious as we are right now. Our children not only can hear everything that is going on around them, but they feel our constant tension and anxiety. They have never experienced anything like this before – neither have we! Although the idea of being off of school may have sounded exciting, they were probably picturing a fun time like summer holiday, not the reality of being trapped at home and not seeing their friends.

Over the coming weeks, you will see an increase in behaviour issues with your child. Whether it's anxiety, or anger, or protest that they can't do things normally - it will happen. You will see more meltdowns, tantrums, and oppositional behaviour. This is normal and to be expected under these circumstances.

Your child needs to feel comforted and loved, to feel like it's all going to be ok. That might mean that sometimes you break from your timetable and spend quality time with your child. Play outside and go for a walk, bake cakes, paint pictures, play board games and watch TV. Do a science experiment together, start a book and read together as a family. Or just snuggle under the duvet and do nothing!

Don't pick fights with your child because they don't want to do their learning on a certain day. Don't argue if they want a break from your timetable. Don't insist on 2 hours of learning time if they are resisting it. If your child is struggling, don't worry about them regressing in school. When we are back in the classroom, we will meet them where they are and help them get back on track. Northwood's teachers are experts at this!

If I can leave you with one thing, it's this: at the end of all of this, your child's mental health will be more important than their academic skills. How they felt during this time will stay with them long after the memory of what Maths and English they did has faded. So please keep that in mind, every single day over the coming weeks.

Keep safe, keep calm and keep smiling.



Mrs Beach and the Team Northwood.

Keep in a routine and exercise regularly. The NHS recommend doing 30 minutes of physical exercise every day.

So many free resources to take advantage of:

- The body coaches morning PE sessions on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/thebodycoach1>
- For now the government have advised one walk/run/cycle a day (do not put yourself at risk and follow government guidelines)
- Online yoga sessions <https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>
- Tai Chi lessons [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=tai+chi](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=tai+chi)
- Use video conferencing apps to workout with your friends
- Use the resources you have at home to create and share your own workouts such as tricep dips using the arm of the sofa, running up and down stairs, using tins or bottles of squash as weights

The News and social media can fuel anxiety and worry in everyone. It is important to listen and follow their advice but you need to give yourself a break away from it too. Consider having designated times during the day without your phone.

LOOK FOR THE POSITIVES:

- Drop in pollution
- Canals clear
- Acts of kindness
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-51963446>

- Use social media or one of the many free video conferencing apps (houseparty, zoom, facetime etc.) to connect with friends and family (only speak to people you know)
- Use helplines provided for support if you need it:
  - Visit the Young Minds website - <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
  - Ring the Samaritans on 116 123 or email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)



## Looking after your mental health during the Coronavirus outbreak.

Having a routine of what you will do and when will help focus your mind.

- Make a list of books you would like to read
- Stay up to date with what's happening by reading a range of news articles (not just about Coronavirus!) - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround>
- Try out some audiobooks
- Take advantage of the wide range of online learning resources available, here are some examples:
  - View a range of online resources on the Northwood Website - <https://www.northwoodprimary.org.uk/learning-at-home>
  - Learn sign language - <https://www.british-sign.co.uk/>
  - Learn a new language - <https://www.duolingo.com/>
  - Keep checking our Facebook page for regular home learning tasks and activities - <https://www.facebook.com/northwoodprimary/>

- Write letters to people in hospital or care homes that currently are not allowed visitors, doctors/nurses and other key workers, old/vulnerable people who live by themselves near you (remember to wash your hands before writing the letter and don't lick any envelopes)
- Make sure to keep yourself and others safe by following the health guidelines:
  - Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds each time
  - Practice social distancing
  - Limit the spread of infections – Catch it, Bin it, Kill it.

Find any way you can to make yourself smile and laugh as much as possible!

- Sit in the garden/yard/or near an open window and appreciate the change in season.
- Focus on the trees, flowers, birds and other wildlife.
- Enjoy the noise of the birds due to quieter roads and lack of traffic.
- Keep a log of the different birds you see - <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/identify-a-bird/>