

Eastlands Primary School

May 2020

Happy Birthday to all our children who celebrate their birthdays in April

Rec: Mia, Kristers,

1: Constance, Claude, Kian, Kiya, Oliver, Shriya

2: Amelia, Millie, Mia

3: Imogen

4: Zayan,

5: Matilda, Anna, Reid, Alphan

6: Oliver, Caspar



Happy Birthday to all our children who celebrate their birthdays in May

Rec: Madeleine, Asher

1: Ruby

2: Gracie

3: Samuel

4: Sienna, Daniel

5: Tharosh, Oliver, Omsari, Leah

6: Ezme, Sienna, Roalds Marsels



Hello All,

I hope you are all safe and well.

It is very tricky trying to get a balance between have a family life and having a structured learning time with children of different ages. Nobody has been in this position before and we are all doing the best we can in an unfamiliar situation. As with adults, children need to feel emotional and physically safe and well in order to learn.

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

Thank you to all parents for your words of support and gifts of chocolates and soft drinks for the school's keyworkers. It is very kind of you.

Please contact us on email admin2415@welearn365.com if you need to, in the coming weeks.

My thanks to the school staff team who have, at such short notice, managed to structure learning. Over the weeks, staff have taught themselves to use different technologies and engage with families through apps and tools such as Zoom, Seesaw and Google Classrooms.

Alongside this, staff have contacted all families by phone and checked that families are accessing free school meals and other entitlements. There has been individual support for some families where needed.

I do hope you have enjoyed the fun activities too.

Safeguarding is Everybody's Responsibility

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Our Communication Channels

Website:

- * Staff have been updating class pages with work regularly. Please keep checking these weekly.
- * I have kept the [Communication page](#) of the website updated with
 - ⇒ messages from the government, useful reference
 - ⇒ websites for information and
 - ⇒ Eastlands messages.
- * Please keep using this page because as changes arise I will continue to update. The government messages tends to be nearer the top of the page and Eastland's messages nearer the middle of the page. I have added some Home Learning tips, which I hope you will find helpful as a parent.
- * The [Support for Families](#) page is updated with useful agencies to contact during this time if support is needed for a family.
- * We continue to text messages out to parents, with reminders or prompts.
- * Staff are having telephone conversations to provide advice and support and check on well-being of families.
- * Letters are sent when more information needs to be shared.

In the media there is speculation around the 'relaxing the restrictions' in the coming weeks. As yet, we do not know what this will look like. The key idea seems to be a 'traffic light' plan of gradually relaxing restrictions, but still maintaining socially distancing.

Clearly, in schools, social distancing is very difficult to do. So, we await advice from the Government, Public Health England and the Local Authority on what this may look like.

What seems to be clear is it will not be 'business as usual' for some time yet.

Whilst children, generally speaking, do not seem to be at high risk, adults are, especially if they have an underlying health risk. Currently in school, we have three members of staff who are 'shielding'; some who have are currently under 14 or 7-day self-isolation. This is likely to be a constantly changing situation and will impact on the staffing in school over the coming months.

I will keep you all informed as more information becomes available. In the meantime, I hope you all keep safe and well.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Edwards.

We all have the right to feel safe all the time

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Children's Wellbeing

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:

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

Pupils ages 7-10 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

Preteen and teenaged pupils:

- ⇒ Acting out – this might include things like picking fights with you or with siblings or abusing alcohol or drugs
- ⇒ Becoming afraid to leave the house
- ⇒ Distancing themselves from their friends and family
- ⇒ Exhibiting intense emotions but being unable to talk about what they're feeling

Here are some resources to help you support your child.

We hope you find this information helpful.

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Take care of yourself

It's 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'll also find lots of 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're 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's 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're all spending more time at home, we can finally take up that hobby we've always meant to learn. Try baking or gardening or learning to knit. These are also great activities we can share with our children

Set goals – it's 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 don't 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're feeling and what you're 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

We all have the right to feel safe all the time

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How to talk to your child about what's happening

No matter how calmly you manage the current environment, children are likely to be anxious, so it's important to talk to them about what's 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're 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's 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

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For older children

Older children will have the same anxieties about their own health and that of their family and friends as younger children. But they're also likely to feel socially isolated, and worried about the result of school closures on their education and what life will be like after the pandemic is over.

In addition to the steps above:

Reassure them that when more guidance comes from the school about how grades will be awarded, you'll share this with them as soon as you have it – you could also check that they understand the information you've received so far, in case there are any points of confusion or worry that the school could help to clarify.

Encourage them to maintain social ties – relationships are especially important for older children, so give them room to keep in touch with their friends

Equip them with accurate information – for example:

[Mythbusters](#) from the World Health Organization

[Data visualisation pack](#) from Information is Beautiful (regularly updated)

Share tools to help them manage anxiety

YoungMinds: [practical steps to take if you're anxious about coronavirus](#)

Mind: [how to take care of your wellbeing when staying home](#)

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're worried about your child's anxiety, **YoungMinds** is a charity dedicated to children's mental health. They've 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.

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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 help-line and online service that aims to find young people the best help, whatever the problem	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	Call 0800 1111 any time for free Have an online chat with a counsellor (9am to midnight daily)

How to make home learning work for your family

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

You're not expected to become teachers and your children aren't 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're 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's 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 chores to do so they feel more responsible about the daily routine at home

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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 don't worry about your children getting behind with learning. Everyone's in the same boat, and when things get back to normal we'll 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
BBC Bitesize Online resource for learning and revision. Starting on 20 April, you'll also find daily	Website: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize
GoNoodle Movement and mindfulness videos for	Website: https://www.gonoodle.com/
STEM.org.uk Free home learning resources for all ages in science, technology, engineering and	Website: https://www.stem.org.uk/home-learning
Twinkl This popular site for teachers is now offer-	Website: https://www.twinkl.co.uk/home-learning-hub
English National Ballet Free ballet classes streamed daily	Website: https://www.youtube.com/user/enballet

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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
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	Phone: Parents' helpline 0808 802 5544 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm)
Cruse Bereavement Care Support for grief and bereavement	Phone: 0808 808 1677 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5pm) Website: www.cruse.org.uk

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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)
Refuge Advice on dealing with domestic violence	Phone: 0808 2000 247 (24-hour helpline) Website: www.refuge.org.uk

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Warwickshire County Council



Telephone Support for Parents

Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service (EPS) is offering direct access telephone consultation to parents and carers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

This service is available for 4 afternoons each week (Monday to Thursday) for parents and carers who live in Warwickshire and who feel they may benefit from consultation with an Educational Psychologist to support them with concerns that they may have at this time.

Concerns might include:

- How to talk with a child/young person about COVID-19 and any worries associated with it
- How to help children/young people to engage with learning whilst at home
- How to support behaviour that can be challenging or difficult to manage
- How best to look after your own and/or your child's mental and emotional well-being on a daily basis

If you would like to arrange a telephone consultation with an Educational Psychologist, please phone 01926 742921 or email eps@warwickshire.gov.uk.

You will be asked to provide the following information:

- Your name
- The telephone number you would like to be contacted on and an email address
- A brief description of the area in which you would like support
- You or your child's school if relevant (if your child is not already known to the Educational Psychology Service, we will not take their name or record details of the conversation)

You will be offered the next available telephone timeslot that an educational psychologist has available and they will then phone you back at that time.

Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service

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