

SENsational learning ideas

Dear Parents / Carers,

This is the first of what we hope will be a short series of newsletters to support you with learning at home with your child.

Adjusting to learning at home

We know that this is a time of adjustment for families and we hope to give you advice to support you. We are developing our home learning website which you will find at <https://www.integra.co.uk/home-learning/> This includes activities which, not only focus on the curriculum, but also on how you can support your child's wellbeing and manage the situation at home.

We have included a special area called SENsational learning to help you support the needs of your child. We will be sharing our SENsational learning ideas with you through this newsletter and these include:

- Skill Builders
- Calm and Happy
- Be Creative
- Stay Active

Thought for the week

**“Do what you can, with what you have,
where you are.”**

Theodore Roosevelt

You are the ones who best know what you have available and what the interests of your child are.

We have listened to parents about how they are managing this new situation and we have given some thought to suggestions for this. We hope these help.

- Remember that in your role as parents / carers you have always been a teacher to your children.
- You run the show - you know your child well - do what is best for them.
- Do not feel under pressure to do all the work the school has sent home if you don't feel able to. Keep it manageable for you and your child.
- Plan your own routine that suits your family - some structure will help you.
- Remember that you will be spending more time together than usual so it is important to keep things positive.
- Give ample time for breaks and to have fun.

How do I decide what we are going to do? Here are some ideas...

- Have a blank piece of paper on the wall, anyone can add things they would like to do during the day.
- Some days / week you might like to pick a theme and follow your child's interest.
- Consider things you can do in the home - our website has a link to the Change 4 Life site ideas for [indoor activities](#) and to the [CookIT!](#) website with recipes, a historical cookbook and activities about food.
- Add things you can do outside for example talking, observing, counting, exploring and gardening.

This week's activities you might want to try

Some of these are more geared to primary aged children, but older children or adults might enjoy these too.

Skills Builders activities

- Paired reading is a wonderful way to support your child with their reading. This YouTube video gives a demonstration of how to do paired reading with your child - [paired reading](#)

- Memory games are a great way to improve your child's memory. This YouTube video shows how to play Kim's Game - find Kim's Game [here](#)
- Audio books are useful learning tools for all age pupils and adults alike - especially if you listen together and talk about it - [BBC Sounds Audio Books](#)

Calm and Happy (wellbeing)

- Be Active Kids have provided a bubble recipe, instructions to make bubble wands and 25 fun activities to do - [Bubbles Activities](#)
- HuffPost have published 37 techniques to calm an anxious child which has ideas for primary and secondary – [37 Techniques link](#)

Be Creative

- For primary illustrator Mo Wilems invites you into his studio to join his LUNCH DOODLE and explore ways of writing and making together – [Lunch Doodle Link](#)
- The Drama Geezers are posting a daily video on their YouTube channel with drama games and activities you can do together at home to suit all ages – [Drama Geezers](#)

Keep Active

- Be Active Kids provides a list of 50 activities children can do using a cardboard box - from box bowling to obstacle courses – [cardboard box](#)
- [NHS Wake and shake](#) Change4Life and Disney have teamed up to bring you Shake Up games - 10-minute bursts of fun to get your kids moving.

Frequently Asked Questions

Our focus for this issue is questions around families can adjust to these changed times.

Do I have to follow a strict timetable with my child?

Some children find structure helpful and if this works for your child then setting up a daily or weekly timetable might be useful. If sticking to a timetable is causing problems then you may need to move away from it to a more flexible way of working. Some children respond well to having a choice of activities. You should think about giving choices based on their interests and your knowledge of your child. Choices could be from a list you create together as a family or from resources online.

My child and I are worried about what will happen if we don't do the work school has set.

These are exceptional times and your child's wellbeing is most important. If you judge that trying to do the work is making your child anxious then feel free to make changes and do activities that will calm your child. Try to choose a variety of activities so that there is a balance between active, creative, learning and things that will support their wellbeing. There will be no repercussions if your child has not been able to do the work school has set. As a parent you could also decide when is best for your child to do school activities and when your child needs a break or social time to support their wellbeing.

My children are really missing their friends what can we do?

One way to address this is through using social media. If your children are primary age you will need to supervise this and set up family communications using something like Zoom or Facetime. Children can catch up with their friends and you could have a time set aside each day when this happens. We have some advice for parents on our website about online safety and safe use of technology which you can access at our website on the [Stay Safe](#) section.

If you do not have access to a computer you could encourage your child to write letters to their friends or to keep a diary that they could share later.

Contact Us

You can contact us with your queries on SENDCOVIDenquiry@southglos.gov.uk or 01454 866123. The telephone helpline will be available between 9 and 1 but you can email in at any time. We will aim to respond within 48 hours. Any questions posed to this email will be used to inform an FAQ section on the South Gloucestershire website.