

Staying safe when learning at home

Dear parents/carers and children,

As part of our required preparations to ensure that we can offer blended or online learning at short notice, we are developing new policies and information packs to support this. We have already shared information about the remote learning support you can expect in different circumstances and we would now like to share this guidance and our online code of conduct.

We have put together some guidance to help you with learning at home. For our younger pupils, parents may find this helpful. For older pupils, we suggest that parents discuss this information with your child. It can help you to understand our expectations whilst you are learning from home, provide you with information about how to stay physically and mentally well, and give you some useful tips for staying safe online.

If you need some more help, please contact us by email (office@deanwood.medway.sch.uk).

Learning at home

Even if you cannot attend school, we want to make sure that you can keep on learning, even at home. We will make sure that you know how much work we expect you to do, how long you should spend on each task and how to submit your work. We will use Teams as the platform for sharing learning.

If you are worried that you will be unable to access remote learning, please inform your class teacher as soon as possible so that we can ensure that work is emailed out or sent via the post.



We understand that there will be more distractions at home than in your classroom, so we don't expect you to work a full six hours with no break! It is important that you maintain a routine and ensure you are still learning, even during these circumstances.

Whilst you are learning from home, we expect you to: -

- Spend the required amount of time on each task we set you
- Complete the required amount of tasks a day
- Tell your parents if you need help with a task
- Send in any work you have completed.

It is important that you: -

- Take regular breaks from schoolwork (eg: every hour, take a ten-minute break)
- Make yourself a plan for your school day and stick to it if you can – don't worry if you stray off path!
- Set some small goals for the day.
- Keep as much of your usual school day routine as possible.
- Avoid doing schoolwork in your bedroom.
- Make it as much like a school day as possible –take your lunch and breaktime at the same times as you would at school.
- Avoid background distractions, eg: the TV – this will make you more productive!
- Ask your parents to contact us via e-mail or Teams if you are struggling with your schoolwork.

How to stay well

It is important to make sure you look after your physical and mental health.

To avoid any unnecessary aches and pains, you should make sure you have a sensible place set up to learn at. If possible, you should sit at a table or desk, ensuring your back is supported, rather than working on your bed or the sofa.



If you ever feel unwell or unable to complete the work set, you should tell your parents and make sure you let the school office know as soon as possible, ideally before the start of the school day.

You must ensure you also look after your wellbeing while you are at home. To make sure you are staying mentally well, try some of these ideas: -

- Get into a routine – you could make sure you wake up and go to bed at the same time each day
- Set yourself some achievable tasks – you could try a new recipe you've been wanting to try for ages!
- Talk regularly with your friends or extended family – you should always talk with your parents about how to set this up
- Stay active – try getting out for a walk every day with your family
- Eat normally – make sure you have three meals a day at regular times
- Try practising breathing techniques – the charity Mind has lots of helpful information here: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/relaxation/relaxation-exercises/>
- Use the time to develop a new skill – you could start painting, learn a language or learn how to bake!
- Make sure you get some rest
- Keep your room tidy to make sure you feel relaxed
- Don't do your schoolwork in the evenings or weekends – you need to balance your home life and school life
- Try not to watch the news too often
- Keep a journal or diary
- Read more often
- Talk to someone if you have any worries or concerns – you can also find a whole list of places that can help if you don't want to speak to your family here: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/useful-contacts/>
- Childline has a website called 'Toolbox' where you can find games, videos and methods to help you with your worries. There is even a 'Calm Zone' for helping you let go of your worries. All of this can be found here: <https://www.childline.org.uk/toolbox/>



Staying safe online

If you are spending all day at home, you will likely be spending more time online. Whilst there are many positive aspects of using the internet, such as keeping in contact with those you can't see and staying entertained, you must also remember to use it sensibly.

While you are spending more time at home, you should consider the ways you can stay safe and maintain a healthy relationship with the internet by doing the following: -

- Having tech-free mealtimes
- Not keeping your phone or tablet in your bedroom
- Before contacting any friends using a device, ensure you have asked your parents and that they have made sure the right settings have been applied to your account to keep you safe
- If you are contacting anyone by phone or video, make sure you do it in a family space
- Making sure you have the right settings applied to the apps and websites you use, so you don't see anything you don't want to and can limit who can contact you
- Making sure you know how to report anything on the apps you use – most of the popular apps have a reporting function. If you need help with this, please ask your parents

- If you need to report something that you've seen online, ensure you use Child Exploitation and Online Protection command (CEOP) (<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>) and the UK Safer Internet Centre (<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/our-helplines>)
- Telling your parents if you are worried about anything you have seen online
- If you want to discuss any worries with someone else, contacting Childline (<https://www.childline.org.uk/>), Kooth (<https://kooth.com>), or any of the contacts listed here: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/useful-contacts>

What to do if you're worried

There may be times when you're feeling worried or concerned about something. You should always tell someone if you feel this way – even if it doesn't seem like an important thing. There are lots of different people you can talk to whilst you're at home, including:

- Parents, carers or someone else in your family
- Teachers or members of school staff
- Doctors, nurses or online counsellors
- Anyone you trust

If you are finding it difficult to speak to anyone, you can start the conversation with something small, like telling someone what you had for lunch, or what you learnt that day.

Some people find it helpful to write things down in a letter. Childline have a really handy letter builder you can find here: <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/getting-help/asking-adult-help/#Writesomeonealetter>.

We will stay in touch with you whilst you are learning from home, this will be via your parent's phone number. If there's something that's worrying you, or you want to talk to a specific member of staff who you feel more comfortable with, you can discuss this on the phone call – remember, every worry is relevant, whether it is big or small. We will also stay in touch as a group via Teams.

If you are worrying about something relating to a classmate, this is also a very relevant concern. You should always tell a member of staff and we will do what we can to help.

Remember, you can get in touch with any of the organisations listed in the 'How to stay well' section of this handout.

If you experience any technical issue while learning at home, you should let your class teacher know as soon as possible so that we can get these sorted for you.