

Dear Parent/ Carer,

Here are some tips and strategies to support you and your child/children whilst at home. Everybody's family is different so find a way that works for you. Select the tips and strategies which are helpful for your family. You do not need to use all or any of them.

Any change can have a huge impact and there has been little time to follow usual strategies to help prepare. It is Important for you not put undue pressure on yourselves, to make time for yourself and to ask for help if you need it.

If your child/children are having trouble completing your school's home learning activities, please contact your SENCO.

Information Sharing

- Limit the information about the pandemic to one or two- preferably fixed moments per day from reliable sources of information such as the BBC and NHS.
- Answer your children's questions at regular times (for example, once a day) but do not provide more information than they need.
- Give a short and clear explanation about the coronavirus/Covid-19.
- Use neutral language and replace negative terms such as dangerous and deadly with positive ones wherever possible. For example, talk about what you are going to do to stay healthy, rather than what you are going to do not to be infected.

Emotional Well-being

- Highlight the many things that are going well in the world.
- Each night, identify 3 things that were positive or good that day.
- Do things that are fun and motivating
- Provide opportunities for your child or children to teach you something
- Provide opportunities to make other people happy such as making cards, funny videos etc.
- Create spaces in your home where you and your child/children can take time out.

Physical Well-being

- Protect yourself and others by teaching your children how to stay healthy.

Routines

- Create opportunities for your child/children to enjoy their special interests and passions.
- Provide opportunities for exercise, relaxation, stimming and breathing exercises.
- If you or your children worry, schedule worry time and then plan your day with distracting activities.
- Organise structured activities and provide opportunities to develop life skills such as planning and cooking meals.
- Keep as many daily routines as possible.
- Create and use a timetable with your family. Offer choices if this is helpful.
- Where possible, and if appropriate, support school tasks including online activities.
- Make all instructions autism-friendly by making them concrete and visual.

For our pupils, working at home may be confusing and difficult, so please don't put pressure on yourself or your child/children. Do what you can, when you can. Keeping yourself and your child/ children as happy and calm as possible is the main objective!

Advice from a parent:

Where possible schedule a break for yourselves. A timer may help visualise how long before a parent/ carers break is over, or the break can last as long as one episode of your child's favourite tv programme. This break goes on the visual timetable at a set time (same everyday) with an explanation of what the child will be doing during this time eg: watching iPad.

Source: Adapted from

<https://petervermeulenblog.wordpress.com/2020/03/16/autism-and-the-corona-virus-20-tips/>

Resources and Websites

- **National Autistic Society**
<https://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines/coronavirus/resources/helpful-resources.aspx>
- **Peter Vermeulen**
<https://petervermeulenblog.wordpress.com/2020/03/16/autism-and-the-corona-virus-20-tips/>
- **Autism Education Trust**
<https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk>
- **Coronavirus, and helping children with autism – Episode 4 'Autism, a parents' guide' with Dr. Ann Ozsivadjian and Dr. Marianna Murin**
<https://www.acamh.org/podcasts/coronavirus-autism-a-parents-guide/>
- **Resources for Autism**
<https://resourcesforautism.org.uk/>
- **Sibs**
Sibs exists to support people who grow up with or have grown up with a disabled brother or sister
<https://www.sibs.org.uk/>
- **Barnet Local Offer**
<https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/>
- **Barnet Parent/Carer Forum**
<https://barnetpcf.org.uk/>
- **Sendiass**
<https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/organisations/27214-barnet-special-educational-needs-and-disability-information-advice-and-support-service-sendiass?term=sendiass>