



Managing Home Learning

Tips for Parents of primary school children

This is an unprecedented and extraordinary time, and you need to look after your own wellbeing and mental health too. Make sure you continue doing the things you enjoy and keep in touch with family (remotely) as much as you can. If your child is too young to play independently for a long time, use screens if you need to in order to get housework done or some downtime for you. This doesn't have to be TV or gaming if you don't want it to be, there are lots of live streams and children's activities (yoga, reading, sports, music etc.) on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. You could even consider asking Grandparents to read a book or run a cookery session over a video call.

Young children learn through play so it's important to keep playing! If you find yourself running out of ideas there are lots of groups and accounts on social media with brilliant ideas for all age groups (see below for a few, but there are lots more).



Remember you are not alone. There are thousands of families in the same position. This is new to everyone.

Share the load. If both parents are at home try to share the childcare, or even better spend time together as a family.

Activities:

- For EY and KS1: look at **Play Hooray** (<https://playhooray.co.uk/>) and **Five Minute Mum** (www.fiveminutemum.com/)
- For KS2 look at **BBC bitesize** (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>) or search **Instagram** accounts of their favourite authors (e.g. David Walliams reads a book each day).
- Join the Facebook group **FAMILY LOCKDOWN TIPS AND IDEAS** or look at **The Green Parent resource bank** (<https://thegreenparent.co.uk/articles/read/lockdown-life-savers>). There are hundreds of ideas for play and activities in this group, most of which use things you'll already have at home. Here are some simple ideas below:
- Make salt dough (you need to mix 250g flour, 125g salt and 125ml water). Once you've made your model, you can bake it in the oven until it's solid, then cool and paint.
- Set up a treasure hunt. Draw pictures for children who can't yet read. This can be as simple as hunting for pegs around the garden, or spoons in the sitting room. Use what you have.
- Take some water and a paintbrush outside and paint with water

- hopscotch outside with chalk.
- Dance! ('This Girl Can' has simple dance routines for children to follow to Disney songs)
- Make a puppet theatre using a large piece of card with a rectangular hole cut in the middle for the stage and some hand-drawn characters on sticks or straws, or even using thin strips of cardboard. You could decorate it, add curtains (if you have leftover scraps of material) and make up your own stories.

Expectations:

Keep activities short and sweet for young children. At age 3 they might manage a learning activity for 5-10 minutes, rising to around 20-30 minutes at 10 or 11. Some children might manage quite well at being set off on a task, others will require more support. Follow your child's lead and don't expect or push too much. Be wary of fatigue (both yours and your child's) and stop if it feels too much. If you're at home with multiple children of different ages, try to stagger the learning so you are able to spend time with each one (e.g. set your 10 year old off first, then spend 10 minutes with your 7 year old on their maths before setting them a short independent task whilst you play pretend shops with your 4 year old). You cannot teach them all at the same time.

Schedule/routines:

Routines are helpful for some people, but not for others. Set one if that is helpful for you. You might like to look across the whole week and set a weekly timetable each weekend. Keep flexible, don't worry if it all goes wrong, just pick up where you left off. An alternative approach might be to set a target or topics each week and structure activities around that (e.g. 'Under the Sea', 'Space'), depending on your child's interests. There are many museums and galleries that you can visit virtually online. Chester Zoo has videos on their Facebook page where you can meet the pandas, elephants, giraffes and more!

You have likely been sent work from school, including worksheets, online learning portals and maybe some project work so you shouldn't be having to make the work up yourself. If you haven't been sent anything, ask your school. You should be able to e-mail your child's teacher, or have a named contact.

The below schedule is an example for a primary aged child. It includes some learning time (reading, writing, maths, topic/creative time) and lots of play time. In school your child will learn in groups of 30 children with 1 or 2 adults. Home learning in a 1:1 setting is much more intense and so sitting down learning time should be scaled down accordingly (consider attention span as above). Remember, **play is learning**, the younger your child(ren) the more of your time should be spent playing.



Example of a primary timetable

Time	Activity
Early morning	Breakfast , morning routine, expectations for the day, share timetable.
9am	Sports activity (e.g. Football in the garden, run or cycle (keeping to appropriate social distancing rules), PE with Joe Wicks (older children) on YouTube or Andy's Wild Workouts (younger children) on BBC.)
9.30am	Reading (being read to, reading to an adult, listening to a storybook – all children's storybooks on Amazon Audible are free to listen to at the moment).
10.00	Snack , outside play
10.30	Maths /number/shape work
11.00	Baking /Gardening/Creative activities
12.00	Lunch , free play
13.00	Literacy /phonics/handwriting/story writing
13.30	Topic /child's choice – learn a new skill?
14.15	Free play inside/outside – set a challenge (e.g. 30 day lego challenge, garden nature hunt)
15.00	Snack , outside play
15.30	Calm activity (e.g. yoga/ballet/singing/storytime –live stream or catch-up)
16.00	TV/screen time/quiet time – mindfulness or wellbeing activity
17.00	Dinner
Evening	Free play and bedtime routine

You can access free visual timetables at TES: <https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/editable-visual-timetable-with-hyperlinks-6182305>

Morning activities

 P.E.	 Reading	 Break Time	 Mathematics	 Handwriting	 Cookery	 Lunch Time
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Afternoon activities

 Golden Time	 Investigation	 I.C.T.	 Break Time	 Design Technology	 Art	 Golden Time
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Well-being:

Above all, protect everyone's well-being. As the poem below says, "Slow down, relax, and take a breath." Children (and adults) cannot learn effectively if they are feeling anxious or worried. Talk to your children, explain (in an age appropriate way) what is going on, answer their questions.

If you are trying to juggle a job as well it is crucial that you set realistic expectations. Set aside time for you to work and be honest about what that is going to look like (maybe an hour or two each day, maybe you'll have to work some evenings). If your children watch a film a day so you can find the time work, so be it. This is temporary. See our well-being section for different ways to manage family well-being.

