

Virtual School – Education Resources

We know that these are unsettling, unprecedented and challenging times for everyone - not least those involved in caring for and supporting children in foster care.

School places are available for children and young people in foster care in England but there is no obligation for foster carers to take up the offer. The general advice is for children and young people to remain at home if possible, however, your child's social worker will be available to discuss the best option for your child.

Government helpline

The Department for Education has launched a new helpline to answer questions about COVID-19.

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 4pm Saturday and Sunday

The Virtual School for Looked After Children is also available to answer and support during this time.

Direct Line (01785) 277173

Virtual School (01785) 278008

virtual.school@staffordshire.gov.uk

As more families face social distancing, self-quarantine, and school and work closings as a result of COVID-19, it's possible to feel stressed and anxious—not only about health issues, but also with the reality of suddenly being at home for many days caring for children. By planning for this and having some activities and experiences ready, it will help you feel less stressed and more prepared!

Online resources for parents & carers:

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/>

Oxford Owl for Home is free and full of activities and fun ideas for parents/carers to help keep children building the skills and knowledge they need whilst schools are closed.

What does Oxford Owl for Home include?

- Oxford Owl for Home is completely free and suitable for helping children aged 3-11
- It contains a huge variety of learning activities, games, storyteller videos and eBooks
- Including specific resources and support for Phonics, Times Tables, and the SATs
- Resources are organised by age/school year so you can easily find the right activities and resources for your child

Twinkl: Free: educational resources that can be used at each step of a child's learning journey. Resource includes 'structuring your day' and a focus on home learning and wellbeing.

Twinkl offer 'School closure learning packs' and educational resources across all Key Stages to include Early Years, SEND and English as a Second Language.

The teacher-created resources provide entire schemes of work and lesson planning, right through to online educational games, augmented reality and so much more.

They have over 525,000 resources and new content gets added every day. You'll find they have normally got what you need before you even know you want it.

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/>

Nursery and Primary Resources



Activities for little ones that don't need a houseful of expensive toys to entertain -

[PlayHooray](#)



Yoga, Mindfulness & relaxation designed especially for kids aged 3+ - [Cosmic kids](#)

Early Education: Free resources and ideas: <https://www.early-education.org.uk/download-free-resources>

Primary & Secondary Resources



Home Learning Resources List for Schools and Families - [Chatterpack](#)



Learning resources for adults, children & parents: find videos and audio clips by level, subject and topic - [BBC Bitesize](#)



Interactive Maths learning for your whole school - [My Maths](#)

[JOHN HOLT GWS](#) Home Schooling and Unschooling Resources - [John Holt GWS](#)

Free Audio Books <https://stories.audible.com/start-listen>

Joe Wicks PE lesson 9-10 every day on Youtube <https://youtu.be/K6r99N3kXME>

Maths resources **NRICH** <https://nrich.maths.org/>

Maths Reception to Year 13 <https://uk.ixl.com/>

Sensory Learning activities: <https://inclusiveteach.com/2020/03/20/150-sensory-learning-ideas/>

RSPB <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-teachers/lesson-plans-and-supporting-resources/>

If you have a garden, become a wildlife detective <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-teachers/schools-wild-challenge/activities/wildlife-detecting/>

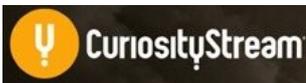
In your garden, look closer <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-teachers/schools-wild-challenge/activities/look-closer/>

In your garden, become a human weather gauge <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-teachers/schools-wild-challenge/activities/weather-wizard/>

Late Primary and Secondary Resources



Fun, informative & Captivating talks to inspire young minds - [TED Talks](#)



1000's of documentaries - [Curiosity Stream](#)



Amazing facts about animals, science, history and geography, along with fun competitions, games and more - [Nat Geo Kids](#)

Action Jackson: <https://www.fixuonlineacademy.com/courses/Happy-Life-Academy> access is **Free for Teachers, Parents and Students alike**. You would just need to register by using your email address and creating a password.

Also Action Jackson has been running a **Daily Dose of Motivation** show on Youtube Monday-Friday at 10am please see the link <https://www.youtube.com/Actionjacksonlive>

The BBC: Five ways to keep your children occupied (and learning!)

Though the extra time together as a family can sometimes be a blessing in disguise, you might be worried about keeping them up to date with their school work or occupying their attention for the entire day - especially if you're stuck inside!

Here are five ways you can keep your kids - and their brains - busy at home.

1) Keep them engaged in real-time learning

If your children are unlikely to spend the day at a desk on their homework, a useful way of engaging them in their learning is by doing real-time interactive activities.

BBC Teach hosts over 30 recordings of interactive 30 to 40-minute programmes called [Live Lessons](#), originally designed for use in the classroom, featuring leading experts and some of the BBC's biggest brands and talent, including Doctor Who, Blue Planet Live and CBeebies. With accompanying printable resources covering a range of subjects and Key Stages, you can make sure your kids are learning even during screen time (*whilst you grab that much-needed break from them and a cup of tea*). And we won't tell them it's school work if you don't.



2) Keep them active

If you're forced to stay indoors, it can be worrying to think that your children aren't getting the physical activity they need.

[Super Movers](#) is a collaboration between the BBC and the Premier League to help get kids moving even in limited spaces, and is easy to implement in your own home.

Packed full of fun activities designed to get kids moving, Super Movers is curriculum-linked, so you can be sure that they're learning as they stay active, even in the confines of your living room.



3) Keep them full

We all know kids can get grumpy when they're hungry, and if you're struggling to get out, trying to get them to do some homework whilst they're screaming for an ice cream can be a daunting prospect.

Well, fear not, because BBC Food has a brilliant guide just for you on [how to teach your children through cooking](#) – including conveying concepts from fractions to adjectives and even practising modern foreign languages. It even comes complete with simple recipes with everything from chocolate chip cookies to pancakes to ice cream, helping you to satisfy those cravings and get their brains in gear.



4) Keep things short and simple

It might be tempting to put on a feature-length documentary on TV so your children can learn for a longer period of time, but this could mean that they're simply not absorbing the information in the most effective way.

The cognitive load of a learning resource is the balance between task demand (how hard it is and how long it takes) and available resources (children's prior knowledge and the resources they have to hand).

[Educational consultant and writer David Didau](#) says: "Successful content has to find a delicate balance – never producing a load that's so high that students become disengaged, but never being so low that learners aren't challenged."

BBC Teach has [thousands of free, short curriculum-linked clips](#) designed for use in class that can help get across key learning points, helping your children learn more effectively.



5) Keep them coming back for more

From a day to a month, when you're keeping children at home for any length of time, it can be difficult to plan activities so they stay occupied for the whole period – especially if you're working from home alongside them.

If your children haven't used [BBC Bitesize](#), now's the perfect time to get them on it. The site is designed entirely for student use, so they can access the content easily without you having to worry about dusting off your old algebra books.

There are thousands of new free quizzes [available to GCSE students](#) who are signed in, which chart their progress and adapt to their learning as they go, and the [games designed for primary-aged children](#) are fun, educational, and come with built-in rewards and levels so they'll want to keep coming back for more.