



# Supporting your child's wellbeing

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Dear parents and carers,

During this difficult time we wanted to reach out to let you know that, even though our school is currently closed to all but a few children, we're still here to support your child and your family in whatever way we can.

You might be noticing signs of increasing anxiety in your child as they're spending more time indoors and outside of their normal routines. These might include:

- > Expressing sadness, anger or fear
- > Not wanting to talk about the current situation at all
- > Having trouble concentrating
- > Acting out – this might include things like picking fights with you or with siblings or abusing alcohol or drugs
- > Becoming afraid to leave the house
- > Distancing themselves from their friends and family
- > Exhibiting intense emotions but being unable to talk about what they're feeling

We've put together some resources to help you support your child. We hope you find this information helpful.

If you have any concerns about how your child is coping or you need any other support from the school, please let us know by emailing us on [welfare@penkethhigh.org](mailto:welfare@penkethhigh.org)

We're extremely grateful for all the support you've shown us as we've adapted to these new circumstances, and we want to reassure you that we are still here to support you too.

We can and will get through this together.

Kind regards,

The Welfare Team

Miss Baron, Mrs Lomax, Mrs Smith, Mrs Walsh, Mr Jones



## Take care of yourself

It's really important right now to take care of your own physical and mental health. Children are very perceptive, and they react to what they sense from the adults around them.

Here are some things you can do to help keep yourself healthy:

- › **Connect with others** – maintain relationships with people you care about through phone and video calls
- › **Exercise** – take some time every day to move. You could go for a walk or run. You'll also find lots of fitness videos online for everything from yoga to dance. Find something you enjoy and that makes you feel good
- › **Eat healthy meals** – try to keep a well-balanced diet and drink enough water
- › **Get some sleep** – being anxious or worried can have a big impact on your sleep. If you're struggling to get a good night's sleep, try to develop a calming bedtime routine – for example, do 10 minutes of yoga or listen to calming music. There are also apps you can download that provide guided meditation to help you get to sleep more quickly
- › **Turn off the news** – it's important to keep up to date, but the 24-hour news cycle can make you more anxious. Limit your exposure to the news to only a small amount of time, just enough to know what the latest government guidance is
- › **Do things you enjoy** – now that we're all spending more time at home, we can finally take up that hobby we've always meant to learn. Try baking or gardening or learning to knit. These are also great activities we can share with our children
- › **Set goals** – it's easy to lose track of the days in our current situation, so it can be helpful to set daily and weekly goals to give us a sense of control and purpose. Examples might be setting a goal of walking for half an hour at least 3 times this week or reading a new book
- › **Connect with the outdoors** – depending on where you live, it may not be possible to spend time outside. If you don't have a garden or terrace, you can still open a window to let some fresh air and sunlight in. Put a comfortable chair by the window so you can look outside and get some air as you read a book
- › **Talk to someone** – during this difficult time, sharing with family and friends how you're feeling and what you're doing to cope can be helpful for both you and them. There are also helplines you can call for support – we've included a list at the end of this pack

## How to talk to your child about what's happening

No matter how calmly you manage the current environment, children are likely to be anxious, so it's important to talk to them about what's happening.

### For older children

Older children will have the same anxieties about their own health and that of their family and friends as younger children. But they're also likely to feel socially isolated, and worried about the result of school closures on their education and what life will be like after the pandemic is over.

In addition to the steps above:

- › **Reassure them** that when more guidance comes from the school about how grades will be awarded, you'll share this with them as soon as you have it – you could also check that they understand the information you've received so far, in case there are any points of confusion or worry that the school could help to clarify. Any specific questions relating to year 11 procedures can be clarified by Mr Farrar [ifarrar@penkethhigh.org](mailto:ifarrar@penkethhigh.org) However, actual grades cannot be discussed or shared
- › **Encourage them to maintain social ties** – relationships are especially important for older children, so give them room to keep in touch with their friends



- **Equip them with accurate information** – for example:
  - [Mythbusters](#) from the World Health Organization
  - [Data visualisation pack](#) from Information is Beautiful (regularly updated)
- **Share tools to help them manage anxiety**
  - YoungMinds: [practical steps to take if you're anxious about coronavirus](#)
  - Mind: [how to take care of your wellbeing when staying home](#)

**If your child struggles with higher levels of anxiety**

Some children are naturally more anxious, such as those with existing phobias or obsessive-compulsive disorders. The current situation can make those anxieties worse.

- Get them to do activities such as counting, ordering and sorting tasks which can help them calm down
- Encourage them to use relaxation techniques such as controlled breathing
- Look out for obsessive or compulsive behaviours and try to get ahead of them early by challenging unhelpful thoughts and assumptions
- If you're worried about your child's anxiety, **YoungMinds** is a charity dedicated to children's mental health. They've opened a [parents' helpline](#) for confidential, expert advice. You can reach them at 0808 802 5544

**Helplines and websites for children and young people**

If your child would like to speak with someone confidentially, there are helplines and websites specifically for them.

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
<p><b>Shout</b> Free, confidential support via text, available 24/7</p>	<p>Text SHOUT to 85258 in the UK to text with a <a href="#">trained crisis volunteer</a> who'll provide active listening and collaborative problem-solving</p>
<p><b>The Mix</b> Free confidential telephone helpline and online service that aims to find young people the best help, whatever the problem</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call 0808 808 4994 for free (11am to 11pm daily)</li> <li>• Access the <a href="#">online community</a></li> <li>• Email <a href="#">The Mix</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>ChildLine</b> Confidential telephone counselling service for any child with a problem</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call 0800 1111 any time for free</li> <li>• Have an <a href="#">online chat with a counsellor</a> (9am to midnight daily)</li> <li>• Check out the <a href="#">message boards</a></li> </ul>

**How to make home learning work for your family?**

We're realistic about what pupils will be able to do during this period, and we want you to be too.

You're not expected to become teachers and your children aren't expected to learn as they do in school. Simply providing them with some structure at home will help them to adapt.

The following tips are designed to help you create a positive learning environment at home. See what works best for your household.



- > **Create and stick to a routine** if you can. This is what children are used to. For example, eat breakfast at the same time and make sure they're dressed before starting the 'school' day – avoid staying in pyjamas!
- > **Involve your children in setting the timetable** where possible. It's a great opportunity for them to manage their own time better and it'll give them ownership
- > **Check in with your children and try to keep to the timetable, but be flexible.** If a task/activity is going well or they want more time, let it extend where possible
- > If you have more than 1 child at home, **consider combining their timetables.** For example, they might exercise and do maths together – see what works for your household
- > **Designate a working space if possible**, and at the end of the day have a clear cut-off to signal school time is over
- > **Stick the timetable up on the wall** so everyone knows what they should be doing when, and tick activities off throughout the day
- > **Take stock at the end of each week.** What's working and what isn't? Ask your children, involve them too
- > **Distinguish between weekdays and weekends**, to separate school life and home life
- > **Give them chores** to do so they feel more responsible about the daily routine at home
- > Ask them to **help you cook** and bake
- > Accept that **they'll probably watch more TV/spend time on their phone** – that's ok but you might want to set/agree some screen time limits

Please don't worry about your children getting behind with learning. Everyone's in the same boat, and when things get back to normal we'll make sure we get everyone back on track.

## Where to find learning resources online

There are plenty of resources online to support pupils' timetables:

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
<p><b>Microsoft Teams (Lessons)</b></p> <p>All resources can be found in Microsoft Teams. Pupils should follow their usual timetable and complete tasks set by teachers. Teachers will make themselves available in the chat function at these times, where possible, to answer any questions pupils may have about the tasks set.</p> <p><b>Microsoft Teams (Personal Development &amp; Enrichment)</b></p> <p>Every Monday an Enrichment bulletin is released with activities and challenges for pupils to take part in. These can be found on the personal development channel in Teams. This offer mirrors the majority of enrichments available in school from knitting to Mandarin Chinese.</p>	<p>Website: <a href="https://www.office.com">https://www.office.com</a></p> <p>Login is the pupil email and their usual password</p> <p>E.g. <a href="mailto:19BloggsJ@penkethhigh.org">19BloggsJ@penkethhigh.org</a></p> <p>The number at the start will be the year that they started year 7</p> <p>If your child is unable to login or you need further support you may contact the IT team on <a href="mailto:remotelearning@penkethhigh.org">remotelearning@penkethhigh.org</a></p>



## Where to turn to for help

It's okay to not be okay. We all need someone to talk to sometimes. If you feel overwhelmed, at risk of abuse or experiencing financial need, there are people you can call on for support:

### Mental health

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
<p><b>Mental Health Foundation</b> Provides information and support for anyone with mental health problems or learning disabilities</p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk">www.mentalhealth.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Mind</b> A mental health charity</p>	<p>Phone: 0300 123 3393 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm) Website: <a href="http://www.mind.org.uk">www.mind.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>PAPYRUS</b> Youth suicide prevention society</p>	<p>Phone: 0800 068 4141 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 10pm, and 2pm to 10pm on weekends and bank holidays) Website: <a href="http://www.papyrus-uk.org">www.papyrus-uk.org</a></p>
<p><b>Samaritans</b> Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair</p>	<p>Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline) Website: <a href="http://www.samaritans.org.uk">www.samaritans.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>SANE</b> Emotional support, information and guidance for people affected by mental illness, their families and carers</p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://www.sane.org.uk/support">www.sane.org.uk/support</a></p>
<p><b>YoungMinds</b> A charity dedicated to children's mental health</p>	<p>Phone: Parents' helpline 0808 802 5544 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm) Website: <a href="http://www.youngminds.org.uk">www.youngminds.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Cruse Bereavement Care</b> Support for grief and bereavement</p>	<p>Phone: 0808 808 1677 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5pm) Website: <a href="http://www.cruse.org.uk">www.cruse.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Kooth online</b> Kooth is a provider of online mental health services for children, young people and adults.</p>	<p>Website: <a href="https://www.kooth.com">https://www.kooth.com</a></p>
<p><b>Stay Alive App</b> Designed for people who feel suicidal and for those concerned about someone else's suicidal thoughts. It includes details of local and national</p>	<p>You can download the free app on IOS or Android. For further details visit <a href="https://www.prevent-suicide.org.uk/find-help-now/stay-alive-app/">https://www.prevent-suicide.org.uk/find-help-now/stay-alive-app/</a></p>



ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
crisis services, along with advice on helping someone else, suicide myth-busting and a safety plan.	
<p><b>Suicide Bereavement support</b></p> <p>If you have been bereaved by suicide, then these services can help you find support</p>	<p>SOBS: <a href="https://www.uk-sobs.org.uk">https://www.uk-sobs.org.uk</a></p> <p>Helpline 0300 111 5065, 9am to 9pm Mon-Fri</p> <p>AMPARO: <a href="https://listening-ear.co.uk/amparo/">https://listening-ear.co.uk/amparo/</a></p> <p>Helpline 0330 088 9255</p>
<p><b>Happy, Ok, Sad</b></p> <p>For information about mental health support services in Warrington and what to do if you can't cope</p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://www.happyoksad.org.uk/">http://www.happyoksad.org.uk/</a></p>
<p><b>CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably)</b></p> <p>CALM phonenumber &amp; webchat, 365 days, 5pm to midnight for men who want to talk things through</p>	<p>CALM runs an anonymous &amp; confidential helpline &amp; webchat service for men 5pm to midnight</p> <p>Tel: 0800 58 58 58</p> <p>Website: <a href="https://www.thecalmzone.net">https://www.thecalmzone.net</a></p>

## Domestic violence

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
<p><b>NSPCC</b></p> <p>Child protection charity</p>	<p>Phone: 0808 800 5000 for adults concerned about a child (24-hour helpline)</p> <p>0800 1111 for children (ChildLine's 24-hour helpline)</p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Refuge</b></p> <p>Advice on dealing with domestic violence</p>	<p>Phone: 0808 2000 247 (24-hour helpline)</p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.refuge.org.uk">www.refuge.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>The Men's Advice Line</b></p> <p>For male domestic abuse survivors</p>	<p>Tel: 0808 801 0327</p>
<p><b>National LBGT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline</b></p>	<p>Tel: 0800 999 5428</p>
<p><b>National Domestic Violence Helpline</b></p>	<p>Tel: 0808 2000 247</p>



ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
<p><b>The Mix</b> Free information and support for under 25s in the UK</p>	<p>Tel: 0808 808 4994</p>

## Community support

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
<p><b>North West Boroughs Healthcare</b> 24/7 Mental Health crisis line for residents in Warrington, Halton, Knowsley, St Helens</p>	<p>01925 275309</p>
<p><b>Warrington Borough Council</b> Coronavirus helplines for people who need support to stay at home</p>	<p>01925 442441 or 01925 442443 Website: <a href="https://www.warrington.gov.uk/help-and-support-vulnerable-people-Coronavirus">https://www.warrington.gov.uk/help-and-support-vulnerable-people-Coronavirus</a></p>
<p><b>Warrington Voluntary Action</b> Support for residents</p>	<p>01925 443322 Email: <a href="mailto:contact@warrington.gov.uk">contact@warrington.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Warrington Foodbank</b> If you need emergency food please contact the foodbank directly</p>	<p>Tel: 0758308521 or 07925937659 Website: <a href="https://warrington.foodbank.org.uk">https://warrington.foodbank.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>St Joseph's Family Centre</b> Emergency food parcels</p>	<p>Email: <a href="mailto:contact@sjfc.org.uk">contact@sjfc.org.uk</a> Tel: 01925 635448</p>
<p><b>Talking Matters Warrington (IAPT)</b> Support with mental health matters such as depression, anxiety, panic, phobia, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)</p>	<p>Tel: 01925 401720 Website: <a href="https://www.mhm.org.uk">https://www.mhm.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Chatterpack</b> A list of free online resources for anyone who is isolated at home</p>	<p>Website: <a href="https://chatterpack.net/blogs/blog/list-of-online-resources-for-anyone-who-is-isolated-at-home">https://chatterpack.net/blogs/blog/list-of-online-resources-for-anyone-who-is-isolated-at-home</a></p>
<p><b>Adam – Youthworker (YFC)</b> Adam is online on Instagram for pupils who may need to chat. He cannot follow pupils but they can contact him to book a time to chat</p>	<p>Instagram: @adam_youthworker Online Monday – Friday 10am – 4pm</p>