

# THINGS TO DO

A weekly newsletter from SEND Supported



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This school year may not have gone as we envisaged back in September 2019, but it is a shining example of the amazing teamwork and collaboration happening every day in our schools across Warwickshire and the rest of the country. Thank you!

Pupils' experiences of the lockdown period will be varied. For some, it will mostly have been a safe and enjoyable time. For others, it may have been challenging or traumatic. Schools and teachers do a fantastic job supporting pupils through the challenges that they face in life – the current situation is no exception.

While it is important to acknowledge the challenges and losses that we may have experienced due to the virus, a positive approach to the future will help. Focusing on building strong relationships, and looking to the future with confidence, can help alleviate some of the worry that children and young people may experience.

Be positive – think about those aspects of the lockdown situation that you would like to retain. Take this chance to embrace different ways of working in your school setting. Think about how you could embed kindness, dignity and wellbeing at the heart of your school community. What would this look like in your school?

The challenges that lockdown has imposed on everyone have resulted in us emerging stronger together, with a focus on what is important and an ability to innovate. This will help us to navigate the road ahead, no matter the obstacles.

We wish everyone a happy and healthy summer and hope for positive experiences for all.

Warmest wishes, Joanna and team



## EMOTIONAL WELLBEING - Kate Griffiths

For those of you who have been following Barry Carpenter's Recovery Curriculum a Webinar 'Reflections on recovery...Reigniting Children's Learning' is being held on July 15<sup>th</sup> at 10am. Follow this link to [register](#) It promises 2 hours of talks, presentations, panel discussions and Q and A's, bringing together the work of the past few months and looking at how to effectively transition children back into learning.

I know a lot of schools have been busy creating virtual transition tours and activities for pupils due to transition in September. The most impressive has to be the Head teacher of the Co-op Academy in Manchester who has found a way of showing new students around his school during the lockdown by recreating it brick for brick on the game [Minecraft](#). Using the actual architects' design for the school, they have now recreated every room in the academy – one

building brick at a time – over more than three weeks and using many thousands of Minecraft blocks.

To help support families over the holidays Warwickshire Family learning is releasing a free Summer Holidays activity pack 'Lets Go Outside'. The activities support the Ready to Learn, Ready for Life' initiative and help to promote children's development and wellbeing. To receive your copy email [TanyaSpeirs@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:TanyaSpeirs@warwickshire.gov.uk)

And finally a brilliant [Youtube video](#) that could resonate with lots of teens and might inspire them to create their own raps about their experiences and feelings...



### LEARNING - Clair Cole

Well, it's hard to believe that this is week 17! I hope that you have found the information in previous issues of Things to Do useful for supporting children and young people's learning this term. Teamwork has been more important than ever. To ensure I can provide the best advice, teachers have continued to give me valuable information about their pupils' learning strengths and needs and the strategies they are using to support those pupils. I've also spoken to many parents who have worked really hard at helping their children; I have been impressed by their resourcefulness and imagination.

Obviously not all children have found it easy to engage with learning at home and the message has been, just do what you can, what will your child enjoy doing - if they enjoy an activity, they will be open to learning from it. I have tried to provide a range of links, activities and advice which help build children's skills through games and fun/creative activities as much as possible. Carrying on with these types of activities through the summer holiday will really help prepare children for the return to school in the Autumn.

So, for this final issue, I would first say take a look back through the other issues which will remain available on our website (<https://sendsupported.com/resource-type/things-to-do/>) – that will certainly be one of my summer activities. The term has been so busy, it will be good to have the time to further explore all the links and ideas in the previous issues.

Finally, there are still plenty of organisations out there focused on providing the best learning opportunities for children at home, so why not:

- Take part in **Reading Together Day on 16 July**. The aim of this day is to bring families, friends, schools and wider communities together - starting conversations, sharing stories, making connections, celebrating reading and having fun. People of all ages are invited to take part in sharing the love of reading for pleasure, to help build skills, increase confidence, support educational attainment and improve wellbeing.
- Try out some engineering and science challenges from the engineers at [Dyson](#). Make raisins dance in fizzy water, write a secret message in invisible ink, make a paper clip float in water and much more (activities are for children ages seven and above and adult supervision is recommended)
- Play word games to develop language skills – examples are provided in the Things to Do Issue 17 resources folder
- Check out a wealth of family activities at [STEM](#)

- For teachers planning additional learning opportunities over the summer holiday, take a look at the [Literacy Trust](#)

I hope you all have a sunny and healthy summer!



#### **AUTISM - Jules McLean**

The [National Autistic Society](#) have information sheets and "I am autistic/my child is autistic" cards you can download to support with going out into the community now that things are opening up.

Autism West Midlands Information sheet "Returning to school and other school transitions" contains information about how you can support your child with transition back to school. Preparation is the key and these tips may be helpful.

<https://www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk/news/returning-to-school-after-lockdown/>



#### **FAMILY & CHILDREN AT HOME - Clare Viney**

In preparation for the Summer holidays, just a reminder from the Family Information Service about the importance of play:

Play is key to a child's development. Play is often felt to be valuable in Early Years. However, the principles of play are relevant for children of all ages, age appropriate games and activities ideas can be used to support this.

Play and creativity is the natural language for the development of children. It places no pressure upon them and should be a fun experience. There are many different types of play; play can be energetic, rough and tumble or can require great concentration and skill. Other games have an element of make-believe and imagination. Through different kinds of play a child is practising and learning a diversity of skills. For instance, some games encourage co-operation, others help language development and so on.

The best way to encourage your child's play is to get down to their level and to play with their toys yourself - model your child's play. The more relaxed you are, the better. If your child sees you enjoying a game, they will often want to join in. The quality of learning in play also increases when adults join in too.

Play is a safety valve which prevents the build-up of frustration. We often talk of children 'letting off steam' in play.

In play, a child seems to re-charge their batteries and find fresh, focused energy.

The Summer holidays could also be a good time to continue to develop a [healthier lifestyle](#). Use these virtual sessions to support your learning.

The Children and Family Support helpline and website. They will be available to support families throughout the summer holidays. Visit THINGS TO DO Issue 17 - RESOURCES to download the Children and Family Support flyer.

[See, Hear, Respond](#) - Rapid support for children and young people affected by the coronavirus crisis. The See, Hear, Respond Partnership is a new service funded by the Department for Education. With your help, the See, Hear, Respond Partnership will quickly identify and support

children, young people and families who are struggling to cope with the impacts of coronavirus. Its aim is to provide early intervention before these children reach the threshold for statutory intervention.

DfE Guidance for Parents/Carers: the DfE have produced guidance for what parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges in the autumn term. [Click](#) here to find out more.

### Heart-warming good news stories



In a police station in [New South Wales, Australia](#), policemen are getting used to a new addition to their squad, 8 month old rescue wombat Ted!

Also this week, five year old [Tony Huddell](#), has raised an amazing £1 million for the NHS by completing a charity walk on his new prosthetic legs.



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