



Our Guide to Remote Care and Wellbeing

Introduction

Pupil wellbeing is at the heart of all that we do at LJS. This guide aims to outline how we will be caring for your family through the closure of a bubble or an ongoing period of school closure, and has been written in conjunction with information provided by:

- o [The DfE](#), including government guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus outbreak
- o [Childline](#)
- o [NSPCC](#)

The coronavirus outbreak has affected everyone's daily lives. Regardless of age, this may be a difficult time for children, young people and adults alike. Some may react right away, while others may show signs of difficulty at a later stage.

We know that how a child or young person reacts can vary according to their age, how they understand information and communicate, their previous experiences, and how they typically cope with stress.

During this time, it is important that you take care of your family's mental health – alongside their physical – and this is something that we are committed to supporting at all times. This guide, school-provided lesson activities and additional links to relevant websites will provide you with lots of resources and information.

Remember, support is always available to you from Laxton Junior School.

Associated Reading

This Guide should be read in conjunction with the following documentation:

- o Our Guide to Remote Safeguarding and Online Safety
- o Our Guide to Remote Teaching and Learning
- o Our Guide to Microsoft Teams

Safeguarding and Pastoral Care Contacts

Laxton Junior School's Safeguarding and Pastoral team are:

- o Deputy Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead: Ms Stacey Crump - smc@laxtonjunior.org.uk
- o Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Online Safety Lead: Mr Fraser Harper - fh@laxtonjunior.org.uk
- o Assistant Head Pastoral: Mrs Jackie Ormston - jo@laxtonjunior.org.uk

Helping Your Children Cope with Stress

Here are some key points to consider about how you can best support your child:

Listen and acknowledge: Children and young people may respond to stress in different ways. Signs may be emotional (upset, distress, anxiety, anger, agitation), behavioural (clinginess, withdrawal, defiance) or physical (stomach aches, headaches, wetting the bed). Look out for changes in behaviour and seek support from the school if you are concerned. Children may feel less anxious if they are able to express and communicate their feelings in a safe supporting environment. Listen to them, acknowledge their concerns and give them extra love and attention if they need it.

Provide clear information about the situation: All children want to feel that their trusted adults can keep them safe. A way to achieve this is by talking openly, at an age appropriate level, about what is happening and providing honest answers to any questions they have. Explain what is being done to keep them and their loved ones safe, including actions they can take, such as washing their hands regularly. It will not always be possible to provide answers to all the questions children may ask, or to allay all their concerns, so focus on listening and acknowledging their feelings to help them feel supported.

Be aware of your own reactions: Remember that children often take their emotional cues from the important adults in their lives, so how you respond to a situation is crucial. It is important to remain calm, listen to and acknowledge children's concerns, speak kindly to them, and answer questions honestly.

Create a new routine: Life has been changing for all of us for quite a while now. Routine gives children an increased feeling of safety in the context of uncertainty, so think about how to develop your new routine. You might think about making a plan for the day/week to include time for learning, playing and relaxing. You might include an exercise/activity plan and create a meal plan for the week; do try to involve your child in the creation of these so that they feel engaged and part of the experience. Don't forget that sleep is really important for mental and physical health, too, so try to keep to existing bedtime routines.

Limit exposure to media and talk about what they have seen and heard: Children, like adults, may become more distressed if they see repeated coverage of the outbreak in the media. A complete news blackout is also rarely helpful as they are likely to find out from other sources, such as online or through friends. Try to avoid turning off the television or closing web pages when children come into the room. This can pique their interest to find out what is going on and their imagination may take over. Instead consider limiting the amount of exposure you and your family get to troubling media coverage. Talk to your child about what is going on and ask them what they have heard about. Try to answer their questions and reassure them in an age-appropriate manner, avoiding too much detail. For children of an appropriate age, [Newsround](#) delivers key messages in child-friendly way so consider watching this with them and using it as a talking point afterwards.

Stay Connected

Support safe ways for your children to connect with their friends. They can do so online or via phone or video calls. For more advice on helping your children stay safe online, please see our guidance.

How Children of Different Ages May React

For Infants to 2-year olds: Infants may become more easily distressed. They may cry more than usual, be more demanding and clingy, or want to be held and cuddled more.

For 3- to 6-year olds: They may return to behaviours they have outgrown. For example, toileting accidents, or being frightened about being separated from their trusted adults. They may also have tantrums or difficulty sleeping.

For 7- to 11-year olds: Older children may feel sad, angry, or afraid. Peers may share false information, but parents can always correct this. Older children may focus on details of the situation and want to talk about it all the time, or not want to talk about it at all. They may also have trouble concentrating.

How we will be Supporting our Children

Well-rounded, confident, resilient, happy children are our aim at LJS. To ensure that this continues we will be continuing to provide the highest quality pastoral and wellbeing support to our pupils and families; including:

- Daily opportunity for live interaction with Form Teachers and peers via the whole class 'morning meeting' and afternoon end of day activities on Teams
- Twice weekly small group live learning sessions
- Active Channels on teams where Teachers and Teaching Assistants will be available during the mornings and afternoons to answer questions, identify any pastoral concerns and engage with pupils and parents
- House Competitions to continue to promote our sense of community and team spirit at LJS
- Weekly assemblies from Mr Robertson and Ms Crump including pastoral and wellbeing content
- Where appropriate, one-to-one and small group wellbeing sessions provided by our Pastoral Care team
- The continued opportunity for our parent community to speak with Form Teachers, the Deputy Head and the Head as required

Looking After Your Own Mental Health

As well as thinking about the children or young people in your care, it is important to take care of your own mental health and wellbeing. Children and young people react, in part, to what they see from the adults around them. When parents and caregivers deal with a situation calmly and confidently, they can provide the best support for their children. Parents and caregivers can be more supportive to others around them, especially children, if they are better prepared. You can access tips, information and support for looking after your own mental health using the [NHS Every Mind Matters](#) website. The apps, [Headspace](#), [Calm](#) and [Balance](#), are excellent tools for supporting your mindfulness and positive wellbeing during future lockdowns.

Looking After Your Children's Mental Health

Excellent websites for your children, which will support you to support their mental health include Childline's [Calm Zone](#), where there are lots of tips to feel calmer. [Shout](#) provides free, confidential support, 24/7, via text for anyone at crisis anytime, anywhere. [Young Minds](#) offers advice and support to children struggling to cope with the impact of coronavirus on their mental health.

Mrs Jackie Ormston

Assistant Head Pastoral

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