



Developing Routines to work through Social Isolation.

Advice for supervising the education of your children under social isolation

1. Have a school "routine"

We know that children, even teenagers, work well and thrive from routines. They feel secure when they know what is happening day to day. Routine may also help if they are feeling anxious and worried about what is happening with Coronavirus.

Think about getting them up at the same time as school would be, having their breakfast and preparing to start school work at the normal time (see below for ideas about how to fill the day). Going to bed earlier, like a school day will also help. Eventually they will be coming back to school, and if they have kept up a routine it will help them to slot back in quickly when they return.

2. Have a school work area.

Being tidy and prepared can mean that the work they produce is of a high standard and they really take it seriously. Think about where they might complete their school work. Whether it is in their bedroom or at the dining table, it would be better if they could work at a table of some sort with their equipment around them. Consider saving the living room and the TV for break times or after school work.

3. Limit distractions when completing school work.

In school the children would not be allowed their phones in lessons. We do this to ensure that they can give their full concentration to their work and the thinking about subjects they will have to do. Consider taking away distractions whilst they are completing school work.

Social isolation might become a little boring, so saving tablet use / smart phone use for break time and after school work is complete will also help to relieve the feeling of restlessness if they have to be cooped up for a long time.

4. Try to suggest a change of activity every hour.

At school they will have a change of scene and activity every hour with a break and a lunch break. This helps them to stay engaged and not to burn out and become distracted. You will have activities from all departments on Microsoft Teams, Seneca Learning or GCSE Pod. Consider following the children's normal timetable as a way to keep them interested and engaged.

5. Physical activity (if you child has a medical condition, you will know how to organise their physical activity safely)

Consider how you could get some physical activity into their day whilst on self-isolation. You might want to join in something fun as well. Make sure that it lasts for around half an hour at least and the activity makes them sweat and gets their heart pumping. What about:

- A step routine at the bottom of the stairs to their favourite 10 songs
- make a home PE motivational playlist as a fun activity!
- Races in the garden, a family football game, a go on the trampoline
- Making up their own dance routine and performing to the family.
- A physical family game on the games console (one that you have to be on your feet and move to!)

6. Keep up to date and it's still good to talk

Watching the news and talking about it as a family will help children, especially those who may be feeling frightened and confused about what is happening. You don't have to have all the answers but encouraging them to ask questions and to be curious helps with their academic development but also to make the situation seem less frustrating and confusing.

7. Use everything as a learning opportunity

This may be an opportunity for the whole family to catch up on jobs that that you have all been wanting to do but have been too busy before. Baking, DIY, tidying can all be a family activity where you can work together and enjoy ticking things off the list. They are the learning opportunities that we all do as parents but sometimes forget how important they can be. It can be a time to become even closer in a difficult situation.

8. Encourage a hobby

At school we would be encouraging attendance at after school or lunchtime clubs. We always think that it is healthy to do something different, get better at something that you love, or learn about something completely different for a change! Ideas may include:

- Maybe there is something that they have always wanted to do and they can watch a YouTube video for instructions.
- Crafting with bits and bobs that are around the house.
- Using that Lego or jigsaw that has been gathering dust!
- Playing board games together as a family or inventing and making your own one!

9. Read!

Yes, we know that that seems like an obvious one for us to say but we all know how important it is to read, encourage a love of reading and to read widely and often. Make sure that this still carries on through the self-isolation. Get involved if children are reticent and are not motivated to read. Read the newspaper on line with them, read to them and with them. There are so many books online and a wide library of free books.

10. Little and often

Keep regular breaks and spread activities out to avoid boredom.