

Working from home

Supporting colleagues who are working from home with childcare responsibilities

Pragmatic tips to help staff and children to stay mentally and physically well whilst working from home:

1. Manage the expectations of yourself and others. You are not a superhero, nor a teacher. Home schooling is a choice and a full time job. You are being asked to support distance learning. Be kind to yourself.
2. If you are feeling overwhelmed with the amount of work you or your child receives from work or school, speak to your line manager or your child's teacher. Tell them what you need and don't need.
3. Be 'child led' and guided by your parental instincts. Focus on your connection with your child as opposed to taking on the role of educational task master.
4. Manage the expectations of the people that you work with and who you are virtually meeting with to let them know that your children are at home
5. Farm out and share the school work load with your family and friends using virtual technology. i.e. grandparents can read stories or be read to. Set up a virtual reading circle for kids.
6. Use different clothing to differentiate between distance learning, play, and work. Different clothes can prompt different roles. Wear your ID badge to show your children when you are in work and take it off when you are not.
7. Make sure that you take regular breaks at the same time as your children
8. Update your email signature to inform others that you are homeworking and that you may sometimes respond out of normal business hours to flex around your childcare responsibilities.
9. If your child is resisting your calls to learn, try not to get annoyed or stressed because that will only exacerbate their stress and they won't be able to function to the best of their ability. If they get upset, close the books and go back to it later – no drama



All of the above tips are just suggestions, do what is right for you and your family. You've got this!

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Resources to aid home learning

- **Twinkl** – a range of home learning resources for all ages:
<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/>
- **Parentkind** – free learning resources for children:
<https://www.parentkind.org.uk/Parents/Free-learning-resources-for-children>
- **Balancing work and home-schooling during lockdown:**
<https://anitacleare.co.uk/balancing-work-and-parenting-when-working-from-home/>
- **ChatterPack** – a special educational needs and disabilities hub:
<https://chatterpack.net/>
- **The Parents' Guide to supporting home learning:**
<https://www.theparentsguideto.co.uk/coronavirus>
- **Action for Children:**
<https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/covid-19/home-schooling-tips/>
- **Five ways to manage your wellbeing as a parent during lockdown:**
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrmhscw>
- **Advice for patients and carers:**
<https://www.annafreud.org/media/11245/option-3-covid-advice-parents.pdf>
- **Free resources from ParentKind:**
<https://www.parentkind.org.uk/Parents/Free-learning-resources-for-children>



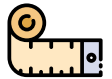
Activities to keep the kids entertained

- **Learn to draw with Rob:**
<https://www.youtube.com/hashtag/drawwithrob>
- **STEM activities at home:**
<https://nustem.uk/stem-at-home/>
- **Free colouring pages:**
<https://www.crayola.com/featured/free-coloring-pages/>
- **Orchard Toys activity sheets:**
https://www.orchardtoys.com/dept/activity-sheets_d0129.htm?fbclid=IwAR22IJLRFhyimksMy3oSZY4MPXr5dggSRqSMCUj3PuiZJXIGNQN6OsjfGsM
- **30 day Lego challenge:**
<https://www.freehomeschooldeals.com/free-printable-30-day-lego-challenge-instant-download/>
- **#TheGreatIndoors activities:**
<https://www.scouts.org.uk/the-great-indoors/>



As a manager, what can you do to support your staff (and potentially yourself) when working from home?

1. Acknowledge that it is really difficult to support the wellbeing of your staff and balance these with the needs of your service
2. Recognise that there is not a one size fits all solution
3. Acknowledge that while as a manager you may need to support your team, you may also need to be a parent and require support yourself.
4. Make sure that any meetings scheduled are family friendly start and finish times.
5. Use the health and wellbeing conversations template as a way to connect with your team and understand what support that they need
6. Model the right attitude and behaviours to demonstrate to your team that self care is essential. Be the change you want to see in others.
7. Utilise and refer to local organisational policy and guidance to use your discretion. Don't forget that common sense should always prevail!
8. Give yourself permission and acknowledge that you might need to change your approach for any support you implement to feel meaningful
9. Encourage your team to attend virtual huddles, colleague's common rooms, sign up to the buddy system so that they can connect with your team and other colleagues.
10. Vary the ways that you communicate, don't always use email. Regularly call your team and use video technology to connect. We need to be able to read all aspects and human triggers from our colleagues to really understand what they need.



*Flexible working suggestions (operational pressures also need to be considered):

1. Annual leave – for example using 1 day's leave per week to help relieve the pressures of childcare.
2. V-Time (A Voluntary reduction in hours for a temporary period). Due to the working patterns of others within your household it may be easier for you to work less hours for a period of time.
3. A change to your working days. The Trust will consider a temporary change to the days that you work to help with personal circumstances. For example your partner may work the beginning of the week and to help with childcare you may request the later part of the week. For those areas doing 7 day working this also applies.
4. Working contracted hours over more days. For example you currently work 7.5 hours a day over 3 days and you request a change to work 5 hours over 5 days shortening your working day. This could be in rotation with colleagues and change from week to week.
5. Working contracted hours over fewer days. As above.
6. Both parents are Key workers with children in school. Staff may wish to request to be able to pick their children up from school and work up their hours at home in the evening.