

This guidance is for schools who are planning ways to support children's learning during school closures.

Schools will need to give families a first point of contact, which is likely to be your school website. This is an already established communication tool for sharing information with families and will be a quick and easy way of sharing learning tasks and links to learning activities during school closures.,



Ensure that staff can upload and change content by themselves, or if you use a website provider, confirm that they are quick to upload the changes you require. Where only one staff member has administrative access, give the same level of access to other members of SLT to allow content to be updated in the event of their illness.

This document provides key considerations, suggested strategies and tools / activities that will allow learning to continue, recognising that all children's home experiences will be different and varied. (Somerset schools will also have received information about management of text messaging for urgent updates to families.)

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Key considerations

- Not all families have online access – ensure that there is a balance of online and offline activities
- Do you already have tools that can allow learning to continue? Consider how you can make more effective use of these systems before looking at new options.
- If considering a new online learning tool (e.g. Google Classroom or PurpleMash) ensure that you are aware of the data protection implications <http://bit.ly/elimdpfaqs> – check with your DPO before signing up. Your DPO will let you know of any possible risks or issues. Data protection will not be a barrier to implementing the tool but must be considered.
- Ensure that children can continue building safe habits when using online tools – remind them of mixing up activities, sharing their online learning with adults, and moving if they have been still for too long – see our [Family Agreement page](#).
- Some staff may require support to identify appropriate online activities and require confidence to use new online learning tools. Consider how you will manage this so each class has equality of access to learning.
- If communicating through the school website, ensure that you or your website provider can quickly and easily upload content.
- Your school will need to agree the routines and expectations around teachers uploading activities, to ensure that staff can manage their own workload, whatever their home circumstances.

Suggested strategies

- **Keep a feeling of community** – use your school website to share the school's key messages and prevent feelings of isolation. Regular notes from the headteacher will be welcomed by families and children and promote the shared learning journey.
- **Build a routine** – add new learning tasks on the same day each week e.g. Monday morning, to maintain a sense of continuity and the rhythms of learning.
- **Don't add too many tasks at once** – don't overload children or families and allow them time to explore the current learning tasks.
- **Communication with parents** – it can be useful to set up a clear communication stream for parents to ask questions about the learning tasks. This could be by setting up a new email address for parent questions e.g. homelearning@nameofschool.educ.somerset.gov.uk with a staff rota for monitoring and a response time of 48 hours. Do not communicate through existing staff email accounts or the school mailbox, to minimise the risk of communication overload and keep data separate, secure and transparent.
- **Personal projects** – alongside regular tasks, give children a personal project to explore which keeps them motivated.
- **Have realistic expectations for teacher feedback** – consider how and when teachers will give feedback on pupil learning, recognising that some teachers may need support to provide online feedback.
- **Recognise that you may need to review and adapt your strategy** – if closures continue for a sustained period, you may need to consider blending a number of online learning tools or a different approach.

We advise extreme caution if you are considering the use of **Live video** with children. Communication with learners must always be open and transparent through official channels. The use of resources such as Google Meet, Microsoft Teams and Zoom must only be with the permission of SLT after a risk assessment has been done. Everything should be auditable (schools can only record the meeting with children if they inform the parent of Data Protection rights). A school will need to be clear how they are guarding against potential misuse by participants and the protection in place for the teacher facilitating the learning experience. [Consider LGfL's Twenty Safeguarding Considerations for Lesson Livestreaming.](#)

Tools for sharing learning

Our [home learning webpage](#) has links to a variety of places you can find materials to support online learning.

Below, we have highlighted some of the free tools which are appropriate to Primary schools.

BBC Bitesize <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/dailylessons>

The BBC has expanded content on its education service, BBC Bitesize, to provide regular daily lessons in English, maths and other core subjects. These lessons will be supported by daily programmes on BBC iPlayer for all age groups: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p089nk5f>

Oak National Academy <https://www.thenational.academy/online-classroom>

Oak National Academy is a DfE backed initiative designed to be used by teachers (as opposed to directing parents to the site) to complement their own lesson planning and teaching until schools fully re-open. Every lesson is free to use for every teacher.

Purple Mash <https://2simple.com/free-access>

Free access to 2Simple's Purple Mash platform is available to all schools for the duration of school closures due to COVID-19. See the information here: <https://2simple.com/blog/using-purple-mash-when-school-closed>.

The platform includes a huge variety of activities to support spelling, grammar, maths, reading comprehension and a range of cross-curricular projects and schemes of work. There is little need for teacher preparation, and classes can be set up by a school administrator. Teachers can set and give feedback on tasks.

Google Classroom

If your school has already set up Google Classroom (e.g. you have purchased a domain, set up classes and trained teachers) this option will allow learning to continue. Teachers can set tasks directly relating to your existing curriculum and provide feedback.

If you have not yet set up Google Classroom, this may not be a realistic option – successful implementation requires planning, significant staff training and testing, as well as a data protection privacy impact assessment from your DPO. It should not be put in place in a hurry, as it may not be effective for all learners. [Google are providing information](#). Schools ICT will support you with this.

NOTE: [Microsoft Teams information](#) is available if you are considering communicating in this way.

Sumdog

Sumdog are providing free access to all of Sumdog Maths, Spelling and Grammar for the duration of closure (up until the start of the summer holidays) <https://pages.sumdog.com/home-learning-during-school-closures/>

This option requires little teacher preparation and gives pupils easy feedback on their learning. For long-term closures, this will not give the depth and breadth of learning that children should experience but may supplement other activities.

Class Dojo

Schools can set up a free class diary to maintain contact with children and parents/carers.

If using the parent communication tool, ensure that all staff are aware of your school's online safety and acceptable user policies, and that all communication is open and transparent. All communications should be kept to questions about learning, not children's wellbeing and non-curriculum matters.

Other learning opportunities

Check out possibilities [on our webpage](#) and at <https://www.remote-learning.online>

PE

Many schools want to link children to [Joe Wick's daily exercise videos](#). We suggest a risk assessment is done by primary schools and the outcome confirmed by SLT about the use of YouTube.

Benefits:

- Daily exercise from a trusted personality, and a sense that they are participating in a wider community (fitness effort).
- This can be a shared core part of the school day by those at home and those in school.

Risks:

- Children will be using YouTube without teacher guidance. They may follow links to inappropriate content.
- Parental controls may be blocking this.
- Participants are encouraged to use Social Media for shares and to add comments.

The risk of moving to other linked content can be minimised by signing up for something like <https://safeshare.tv/>. Paste in the YouTube URL and get a link to the video without ads and comments. You will need to sign up for a free account to create a link; but can view the link without an account. You can set it to start the video from a certain point.

Alternatively use the [Children in Need Joe Wicks videos](#) although this will not be the same dynamic experience.

Computing

Technology in our Lives home learning experiences based on our New Wessex Planning are available

Year 1 and 2  [Discovering technology in our homes](#)

Year 3 and 4  [Thinking about technology in our communities](#)

Year 5 and 6  [Considering access to technology across the world](#)

Barefoot Computing have published a  [number of home activities](#) for a variety of aspects of computing.

Try out <https://www.cloudstopmotion.com/home/covid19> for a creative multimedia experience.

Reading books

- <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/oxford-owl-ebook-collection> - Set up a free account, access the free e-books
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-storytime/zdv4vk7> - Audio stories for younger learners
- <https://www.storynory.com/archives/stories-for-younger-children/> - Audio stories for primary learners

Software for children with particular needs

Crick Software are offering every school free access for their pupils and teachers to use Clicker or DocsPlus on their home devices.

[Clicker](#) for primary schools – works on iPad, Chromebook, Windows & Mac.

[DocsPlus](#) for secondary schools – works on Chromebook, Windows & Mac.

To access this offer [complete this access request form](#). You will be sent access codes and installation instructions. For additional information call 01604 671691 or email info@cricksoft.com.

Support for parents

Provide guidance and support for families on your school website

- 'Common Sense' support for parents: <https://www.common sense media.org/about-us/news/press-releases/common-sense-provides-resources-for-parents-to-prepare-for-coronavirus>
- NSPCC/O2 helpline 0808 800 5002 9am - 7pm
- [Ask about Games](#) and [Common Sense Media](#) list of appropriate games
- Change for Life Activities: <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities>
- www.internetmatters.org (including advice by age group)
- www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers (including advice on Parent controls)
- www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre (including safety tools on social networks)
- <https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/checklists> (including Roblox and TikTok)
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/advice-and-info/share-aware.pdf> (including talking points, getting the family involved and 'safety starts with you')
- CEOP have provided [home activity packs for online safety](#) alongside parent and carer helpsheets.
- <https://www.sglospc.org.uk/resources> A selection of resources for home learning
- <https://www.integra.co.uk/home-learning> Home learning resources organised by subject

Take care of yourselves. Stay in touch. Use Office 365 or GSuite for Education to work collaboratively on documents and Skype, Teams and Google Hangout meetings to catch up with each other.