

21/03/20

Children working from home: A Guide & Tips for Parents/Guardians

Dear parent/guardian,

I hope you are keeping well and coping as well as you possibly can during this difficult time! I want to update you from our end here in GSNP. I want to give more clarity to parents/guardians on how to go about offering support to your child/children at home. At this stage, we will provide guidance for the period leading up to the scheduled Easter Holidays. This will be reviewed immediately should an announcement be made by the Government/Department of Education and Skills re: school remaining closed for an extended period from 20th of April onwards.

We are very aware that the Coronavirus is affecting each household and family in it's own unique way, be it through the stress of becoming unemployed or the uncertainty around the prospect of becoming unemployed, having to work from the homeplace, trying to make contingency arrangements to cover childcare, trying to protect our loved ones from contracting the Covid-19 virus to name but a few! In the midst of these pressures, you are burdened with the additional responsibility of trying to offer support to your child in accessing an education from the home. I want to be very clear on this: Firstly, you are not a qualified teacher and it wouldn't be right to overburden yourself with this unnecessary responsibility. Follow the guide provided by the teacher ensuring your child works at their own pace. You will receive more specific guidance re: what Apps/Links to access in the coming days. The most important thing here is to spend time with your child when you can and to utilise the resource that is at your disposal - the home environment, in supporting your child in a practical way.

We do not want to add to what is already a stressful and worrying situation. To that end, you will be notified by Tuesday morning in an attempt to provide clearer and more specific guidance relevant to your child's class. As you are probably aware, there are a number of lists highlighting wonderful Apps/Links accessible on the school website @ www.gsnp.ie and also on the school instagram page [gsnp_lucan](https://www.instagram.com/gsnp_lucan).

But, where do you start?!!

Temporary Plan (the following will be integrated with the original plan of work communicated on Thursday the 12th of March relevant to your child's class)

Apps/Links: The class teacher from your child's class will recommend @ 5 specific links/Apps for your child to engage with over the course of a week. This is to provide guidance and clarity to you rather than becoming overwhelmed with endless lists of resources. It is hoped this information will be communicated to you by Tuesday morning

SeeSaw: The children from 1st to 6th class are already registered on SeeSaw. The teachers will use this forum 2/3 times a week to communicate with the children for the following purposes: *To assign work; to observe work completed by students; to provide feedback to children and/or to post comments up for the class.*

The infant classes are not registered yet. Due to these unforeseen circumstances, we are in the process of creating a link for each class teacher in the infant classes. The link will be sent to the parent. The parent will be asked to click on the link and select their own child's name. There are two different Apps: (1) *SeeSaw family* where parents log in to view their child's work, and (2) *SeeSaw class* where the children log in and put up their work.

I recommend you send an e-mail to the school @ oifig.gsnp@gmail.com by 18:00 on Monday the 23rd March should you decide not to give consent for your child to engage with SeeSaw. A QR code will be sent on to you relevant to your child's class. Your child will be able to log in using this QR code. A separate e-mail will be sent to you with instructions re: registering on SeeSaw. We hope to have the infant classes up and running on SeeSaw by midweek.

Tips and other Suggestions:

While we will always recommend prioritising numeracy and literacy skill development through regular engagement with the core subjects of Irish, English and Maths, it is important to make the most of the resources available to you in the home in developing your child's life skills for the future. Opportunities present themselves in all situations no matter how bad! The following are a few ideas/suggestions:

- Practice baking at home (brown bread, fairy cakes, cakes etc)
- Yoga for kids - (Mental Health & Wellbeing) - Resources available online
- Physical exercise activities in the back garden (resources/links available on the homepage @ www.gsnp.ie and instagram page @ [gsnp_lucan](https://www.instagram.com/gsnp_lucan))
- A nice act of kindness to either your Mother/Father/Brother/Sister or pet
- Initiate contact with your grandparent(s) via phone/skype or facetime
- Play board games and/or card games together (social interaction)
- Basic skills relating to household chores (age appropriate tasks recommended) such as: washing and peeling/cutting vegetables for mealtimes; familiarising with how to use the washing machine; emptying and filling the dishwasher; emptying and filling the green, grey and brown bins; cleaning up the kitchen after mealtimes, cleaning floors properly; sorting/folding/hanging up clothes, dressing and changing bedclothes, cutting the grass, weeding, cleaning doors and windows, ironing etc..)
- Art activities: drawing, painting and colouring; construction (build or construct model shapes using recyclable materials)
- LEGO or building with bricks
- Jigsaws
- Basic knitting or sewing skills

General Recommendations:

- Our general recommendation is to follow the class teachers plan/guide re: time spent each school day on school work (e.g: 1 hour for 5th/6th class; 45/50 minutes for 3rd/4th class). This is a guide and your own personal circumstances will dictate what is practical and what is not practical **(Monday - Friday)**
- We recommend you encourage your child to read Irish and English books on a daily basis **(Every Day - even if it's 5 minutes Irish & 5 minutes English)**
- We recommend you go through the programme schedule for TG4 for the coming week and ask your child to select 2 programmes of their choice to watch. It is very important to facilitate your child to be exposed to listening to the spoken Irish language.
- RTE2 will broadcast daily 'school' on TV to support parents and kids at home. It should be a help to parents struggling at home. This is due to commence on Monday the 30th of March from 11:00am - 12:00pm. The curricular content is suitable for classes ranging from 1st - 6th class.

The above is intended to serve as a guide as we are very aware that every individual and every home have their own unique challenges brought about directly or indirectly by Covid-19. It is imperative not to put yourself under any additional unnecessary pressure and stress! Please look after yourself and your family. Situations such as these can remind us that our family and loved ones are more important than anything else!

Yours sincerely,

Liam Breathnach (Principal)