

Staying at home over the coming weeks is going to be challenging for everyone.

From time to time we plan to share with you new and different ideas of activities that you can do together as a family, as well as signposting agencies and resources that can offer specific help to you.

Our [school email](#) is being checked on a regular basis, so if there is something particular that you feel the school may be able to help you with, please do get in touch.

Tim Edwards-Grundy

St Mary's Church Cogges can no longer meet together on a Sunday morning, but you can join them every Sunday morning at 10am on their [Facebook page](#).

If your children are missing singing the songs that we often sing during Collective Worship they may enjoy listening to music from [Rend Collective](#), [Grace Vineyard](#) and [CJ and Friends](#).

During RE and Art week your children accessed 'Prayer Spaces' in St Mary's. Be Space have produced some '[Activities @ Home](#)', which you and your children may enjoy together.

You might also like to listen to Simon Kirby's [podcast](#) in which he chats to their Children and Families worker about helping children to grow in faith at this time.

All of us, but particularly children, really benefit from structure and routine. This helps all of us feel settled and secure and will support families to feel more relaxed.

- Set up a daily or weekly family timetable.
- Set aside regular times for schoolwork, within the normal school day.
- Keep weekends and evenings less structured.
- Try and keep mealtimes at a similar time each day and eat all together as a family.
- Set aside some time for jobs around the house.
- Spend quality time together as a family.
- Stick to a regular bedtime.

Before the lock down staff met together to talk and plan for the coming weeks.

Staff are continuing to work together, using a whole raft of online methods, to make sure that there are good plans in place to support our whole school community during this uncertain time.



[Pegasus theatre](#) has brought together a list of 50 fun and interesting things you can do with your children whilst at home.

Some of them require some additional resources, but many just involve things you already have in your home.

If you are stuck for an idea of what to do next, why not pick something from the list?

Most of us are frequent users of social media and follow the news regularly.

In these challenging circumstances, try to limit everyone's screen time. Make screen time limited and planned.

There is lots of 'fake news' across the media, make sure you are only accessing [reliable and factual](#) sources of information and limit the amount of news that you read/listen to.

Remember also to check that all members of your family are safe online, take some time to check parental controls and privacy settings. Children should always use phones, tablets and computers in a public place, rather than alone in their bedrooms.

### Where can we go during the lockdown?

Narnia? Treasure Island? Hogwarts? The Secret Garden? Middle Earth? Mr McGregor's Garden?

Search online for sites where you can download e-books for free or listen to stories being read.

Take some time to enjoy re-reading family favourites. Try reading a longer book together as a family, a chapter a night, and see where the story takes you.

Good places to start your online search for books are – [Oxford Owl](#), [Storyline Online](#) and [MrsP](#). Many other sites also allow you to download children's books for free for a period of 30 days.

### Fresh air and exercise

Moving makes everyone feel better. There are now lots of online exercise routines that you can do together as a whole family, below are two suggestions.

[Joe Wicks](#) is streaming a daily workout at 9am each weekday morning

[Oti Mabuse](#) has uploaded a number of family friendly dance classes

At the moment you are still allowed to go out for exercise once a day as a family group, as long as you maintain social distance. Make sure you and your children get out once a day and enjoy walking or cycling together.

Remember also to open your windows or stand in your doorway to benefit from the light and fresh air.

This period of lockdown provides you with lots of opportunities to spend quality time together as a family and make memories together. Make the most of the time that you have, find things you enjoy doing together and learn new things together.

Remember however that everyone needs a bit of time to themselves! If you can, make sure that everyone in your house gets 30 minutes to themselves at some point every day. Perhaps you can agree a quiet place where anyone wanting some time out knows they can go and be left alone!

Remember to stay in frequent touch with family and friends. There are lots of different ways of staying in touch virtually either one to one (WhatsApp, FaceTime, Skype) or as groups of individuals (WhatsApp for groups of up to 4 people, or Zoom for bigger groups).

Sending text messages, emails or making phone calls are also important ways of keeping in touch with others whilst you cannot visit them in person. Encourage your children to make cards and write letters, these can always be delivered in the future.

If you feel that you, or any member of your family, is in need of some additional support, please do reach out to professional organisations that can provide advice or resources specific to your need.

[Family Lives](#) – 0808 800 222. Family support for all challenges and issues experienced as a family.

[Young Minds](#) – 0808 802 5544 Supporting children's mental health.

[Oxfordshire Mind](#) – 01865 247788 Supporting mental health across the age ranges.

[Childline](#) – 0800 1111 Support for young people.

[Domestic Violence Helpline](#) – 0808 2000 247

[Samaritans](#) – 116 123 If you need to talk.

[MASH \(Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub\)](#) – 0345 050 7666 For advice regarding concerns about a child.

West Witney Food Bank – 01993 890000

**In an emergency always dial 999.**