

Ideas to create nurturing connections virtually with learners during school/ELCC closures



Renfrewshire's Nurturing
Relationships Approach

Environment

- Establish a single home base if possible, e.g. Seesaw, Canvas, Google Classrooms. Going to the same place/using the same tools will create a feeling of familiarity and comfort.
- Nurture an environment in which learners feel safe about offering thoughts and opinions.
- Provide a safe space for making mistakes and asking questions to check for understanding, promoting a growth mindset.
- Encourage a community amongst learners, where they can build on each other's contributions.
- Most importantly, try to create an enjoyable environment which sparks interest and spreads joy!



Transitions

- Daily morning check ins will begin to create a predictable routine.
- Provide a flexible routine as opposed to a full timetable which may cause additional stress for families, e.g. morning literacy and numeracy tasks and afternoons used for creative and more relaxed activities.
- It is important that your learners feel they are being 'kept in mind', e.g. 'I'll be thinking of you over the weekend and looking forward to hearing from you on Monday.'
- Be aware of the quiet children- alert your HT or EPS if you have any concerns.

Language

What your children will miss most about being off is the human connection that is provided in the classroom/playroom and the relationship with adults that are most important to them.

Personalised interactions with your learners will be invaluable during this time.

Examples of this could be:

- emails
- video messages
- messages from the head teacher
- comments/feedback on submitted work

For those with no access to internet:

- phone calls
- postcards



Responding to learners' contributions will build their confidence and make them feel valued.

Encourage learners by providing positive, personalised feedback on contributions and progress.

Create opportunities to discuss what they're learning with their families.

Learning Understood Developmentally

- Simplicity is key when planning home learning.
- Children with ASN or who are considered vulnerable may have a lower *emotional age* than *chronological age*- use words and explanations that are appropriate to both.
- Plan tasks that can be completed independently where possible. Parents/carers may still be expected to work from home and support may not be readily available.



- Tasks should have very clear instructions and only utilise one or two resources to avoid overload of information.
- Flexibility is very important- provide choice and consider different learning styles.

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Behaviour

- Be aware and empathetic to the fact that this is a stressful time for both children/ young people and their families.
- Children look to their primary caregivers to feel safe and secure. If the adults are feeling high levels of stress, children can absorb this unintentionally.
- When children feel stress, they will seek control. Provide structured activities that children can feel in control with, e.g. allow them to be part of making decisions and be part of creating their own new routine.
- Be available to support both academically and emotionally if needed.

Visit our blog for useful guidance and resources:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/re/renfrewshireeps/ych/>

Wellbeing

- Don't forget your own self-care! This is vital in managing stress. Try to eat healthily, drink lots of water, socialise (even if through technology), go out into nature and take part in activities you enjoy.
- Remember- you are doing your best in very difficult circumstances and your support and interactions are valued greatly!



Photo credit: @KilbarchanPS (Twitter)

References: '7 Ways to Nurture Emotional Engagement in the Virtual Classroom' by Jennifer Hofmann

'4 Tips for Teachers Shifting to Teaching Online' by Kareem Farah

'Telling Children about Covid-19: Advice for Parents & Those Working with Children' by Get PsychEd