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Dear Parent/Carer

Parental Survey on Remote Learning

Thank you for taking the time to complete our recent remote learning survey. We know that this is an extremely difficult and challenging time for parents/carers as you juggle home schooling with life and work. Your feedback is appreciated, and it is incredibly valuable to us.

The feedback lets us see what is working well with our remote learning offer, and what the challenges have been for families, and will allow us to understand those challenges better and put additional support in place where we can.

Home learning cannot replace learning in a school, and none of us can turn our homes into schools or become teachers. Rather what we are all trying to do – parents/carers and teachers – is provide the best possible support for our children and young people through these difficult and challenging times, ensuring that we are giving them the best possible education that we can.

We are absolutely in this together – if you have any specific questions or concerns your child's school will be happy to help you in any way they can.

We have passed on school-specific feedback to individual schools and they will use your feedback to inform future planning.

We have split the general survey feedback into specific themes and have offered some further comments/information on these below.

Health and Wellbeing

A large number of parents/carers expressed concerns on the effect remote learning is having on their child/children's mental health. Some of our children and young people have enjoyed remote learning while others have not. Among those who have found it challenging, many have missed the social aspects of school and being with their friends.

If you or your child/children are finding remote learning challenging, we are here to help.

There is support available and we've listed some helpful supports that you can access. If these don't help, please let your child's school know and they will do everything they can to offer support.

- ['Skills for Recovery'](#) is a digital programme that can help you and your family cope with difficult events and improve your wellbeing.
- The 'Coping During Covid' is a support service for you and your child or children if you are worried about your wellbeing. You can arrange to speak to someone by emailing reps@renfrewshire.gov.uk
- Our counselling service, The-Exchange, continue to offer support to our children and young people. Appointments take place online for children learning remotely, or in school if they are attending the hub. The team will also check in with parents. New referrals can be made on The Exchange [website](#). You can also find out more about the service by visiting Renfrewshire's Health and Wellbeing [blog](#).

Learning

Many of you told us you were feeling pressured to complete all the learning tasks allocated to your child/children, especially when doing this in and around your own work commitments.

Please do not feel under pressure to complete school tasks. All any of us can do at this moment is to do our best. We do not expect you to be turning your living rooms into classrooms or to become teachers.

Teachers are on hand to help. Your child's school is available to help.

Please do not sit and worry or feel in any way pressurised. If you need help, it is available – pick up the phone to your school or contact them by email.

Here is some general advice designed to make home learning easier:

- Don't put pressure on yourself to fill every hour with schooling. Remember that every family is different and what works for one won't work for another – the important thing is to strike the right balance for you and your family.
- If your child/children is/are being given too much work, let their teacher know and have a discussion with them.
- Children and young people should take a break from learning every 45 minutes or so to keep their minds fresh.
- Remember that if your child does not understand something let your child's teacher know so they can help. That's their job and they want to help and support their pupils.

You don't have to sit in front of a screen to learn

In school we encourage pupils to be creative and active – there are lots of ways that you can do this at home, and you probably already do a lot of them without thinking about it, from baking to going for a walk.

Here are some suggestions:

- Activities on Renfrewshire's [Educational Psychology Service website](#) help young children to learn and relax through play and other activities. However, the ideas and activities will also be helpful and fun for all the family.
- Be playful and creative through play, art, music, dancing and singing. You could have a look at some of the fun ideas and activities on [Twinkl](#). They have activities for primary and nursery children as well as children who have English as an additional language (EAL) and children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).
- For crafting ideas, outdoor learning activities and home experiments have a look at what [Dynamic Earth](#) have to offer.
- For art and design activities try [Tate Kids](#)
- Exercising together is a great way to expend energy and stay fit, healthy and reduce stress. Try activities suggested [here](#).
- Cooking can be a great way to use practical maths skills like fractions, ratios and time. It's also a great skill for later life! Try this [site](#) for the benefits of cooking with your children and some great recipes.
- To help children look forward to the end of physical distancing, keep a list of all the people, places and activities your children are missing and look forward to having fun ticking them off when the restrictions are lifted.

IT

Many parents are concerned about their technology skills and are worried that they are not able to support their children appropriately. Others reported difficulties with access to digital lessons and activities because of their devices and wifi. Again, we are here to help. The best thing to do is to contact your school in the first instance.

- Our schools are using a number of digital platforms to deliver home learning. Guides are available from your school. There's also a range of short films for parents/carers to help you log on to SeeSaw such as this [introduction to SeeSaw](#) or [What is SeeSaw for families](#). Please contact your child's school if you are experiencing issues logging on to your child's digital learning platform.
- [Glow connect](#) has advice on how you can support your child's learning using Glow.
- If you do not have internet access at home, we have a small remaining supply of dongles. These are free devices which can provide better internet access. If this is something you think might help please contact your school.
- If you don't have access to a device – laptop, desktop, tablet or smart phone - please let your school know. We have provided thousands of devices to ensure that there is at least one per family, where no device was previously available. If your school is able to lend you a laptop or tablet they will.

Your child or children do not need their own individual device to learn remotely. Schools are planning their lessons knowing that not all pupils have their own device – remote learning is a mix of online and offline – pupils should not be sitting in front of screens all the time.

ASN Support

Some parents told us that children who have additional support needs are finding this period of lockdown difficult. There is help at hand:

- Our Educational Psychology Service provides [advice, guidance and links](#) to help families.
- Some of our specialist teams such as Home Link Service are still available to support you and your child or children remotely. If your child previously had support from one of our teams, please check with their school to see if this can continue remotely.
- You can access [helpful resources for older primary and secondary pupils](#) to help them understand COVID-19 on our Educational Psychology Service Glow blog.

If you have any questions or concerns at all please call or email your child's school in the first instance.

Conclusion

Thank you so much for everything that you are doing to support your child to learn at home. Please do not underestimate how much this is appreciated by everyone, your child/children included!

This letter covers the key themes and gives some general advice but if you still have questions please remember we are in this together, and teachers are here to help.

Education Scotland have also published [advice on remote learning](#), which you might find helpful.

Teaching your child or children is our job, and we're still here and available to do it to the very best of our ability even though schools are closed.

Do not worry or suffer in silence, we're just a phone call away.

Finally, my sincere thanks for your continued patience and support.

Yours sincerely



Julie Calder
Head of Service (Curriculum and Quality)