



Lancashire SEND Specialist Teacher Resources

Home learning ideas for pupils with Special Educational Needs

The Coronavirus pandemic means that **parents and carers** of young people with **SEND** are facing uncertainty. We know schools are on the front line and are playing a **hugely important role** in keeping communities going in these challenging times. With lots of parents having to teach SEND pupils at home we thought we would send you a weekly themed resources that you can share with your teachers and parents.

Home Learning

In the coming weeks we hope to cover a range of topics that would be suitable for children with a range of learning needs. The topics will vary but will cover broad areas of cognition and learning, communication and interaction, social and emotional wellbeing and sensory and physical needs. We welcome any feedback from parents and carers.



Getting Started

1. Have a daily plan – include your child's interests and motivators
2. Flexibility – be prepared to change the plan
3. Chunk activities with a practical, movement break between.
4. Developing life skills is also learning.
5. Incorporate a range of tools to engage learning e.g. books, apps, garden, household objects.
6. Remember every young child can learn, just not on the same day or in the same way.





Anxiety

Anxiety is part of everyday life, however during the pandemic anxiety may well have been increased in children and family members. Including everyday activities which can promote well-being may help families that are struggling to cope during this difficult time. Below is some general advice for parents including activities and links to resources and information. I hope you find it useful.

Advice for Parents/Carers: What to do if my child is worried or anxious about life after lockdown?

Everything has changed very quickly and we had to ask our children to get used to things being different. Lots of children and young people may not understand why we had to make those changes and it might have brought lots of mixed feelings, both good and bad.

Most of us will have changes that we are worried about or make us nervous. These will be different for different people. Some children may worry about some things more than others. Below are some top tips to help you help your children if they are worried or nervous:

Give children space to share their fears. It's natural for children to worry. Let them know they can always come to you for answers or to talk about what scares them. It can help to have 'worry time', a set part of the day to get all the worries out. Sometimes children find it helpful to write worries down and throw them away. Remember, no worries are 'silly' and try not to use phrases like 'don't worry'. Children might be worrying about something which seems small to us as adults but are very real to them!

Know what they're looking at. Be aware of how your children get news and information, especially older children who go online independently. Point them to age appropriate information so they don't end up finding news that scares them, or gives incorrect information. If you are talking with the other adults around you, or on the phone, just be aware of what kids can hear. They might not always look like they are listening, but it is amazing what they hear! You might want to look at this link which shows how the media shows facts differently to get us to click on their stories. And this BBC Newsround link on how to spot fake Covid-19 news.

Give your child specific things they can do to feel in control and focus on what you are doing to feel safe. Teach children that getting lots of sleep and washing their hands well, eating healthily and exercise can help them stay strong and well. Explain that regular hand washing also helps stop viruses from spreading to others. You can do these things together too.

Talk about all the things that are happening to keep people safe and healthy. Young children might be reassured to know that hospitals and doctors are prepared to treat people who get sick.

Let your children know that it's normal to feel stressed at times. Everyone does. Recognising these feelings and knowing that stressful times pass and life gets back to normal can help children build resilience.

Take small steps. Everyone will have been doing things a bit differently during lockdown. Some children may not have been outside their homes/gardens. Others may have had to go shopping with a parent or been at school and be more used to changes like 'social distancing' and seeing people in facemasks. If your child is worried about going out, start small with just a little walk or a drive to see some of the changes. It can help to build up each day (within the guidelines) so that children can do a bit more each day, rather than doing everything all at once.



Resources for younger children talking about anxiety and ways to calm down

Cbeebies ways to help kids keep calm

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/joinin/seven-techniques-for-helping-kids-keep-calm>

Cosmic Kids YouTube Channel Yoga and Mindfulness for Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga/featured>

Resources for older children

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ME5lZn4-BAk&feature=youtu.be>

Video: ways to support young people through anxious times

Headspace is an app and series on Netflix which gives children and adults an introduction to meditation.



Helplines

Childline - Telephone 0800 1111

The Mix - Aimed at people under 25. Telephone 0808 808 4994 from 4pm and 11pm every day of the year. They also run a crisis text service, text THEMIX to 85258.

Crisis Text Line - Text SHOUT to 85258



Activity 1. Worries list

My Worries List

Please write in the below boxes what worries you have.

Think about these worries in three groups. An example has been given to get you started.

These worries make it impossible/very difficult to do something.	I am too worried to stay at my friend's house on my own. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
These worries make it hard for me to do something but it's not impossible.	I am really worried about sitting my spelling test. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
I have these worries a lot but they don't stop me doing anything.	I worry about eating in the school dinner hall. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Activity 2. Relaxation Spin Wheel

The relaxation spin wheel is designed to give young people ideas about how to relax. This can be used to calm down after a behaviour incident or when a young person is feeling anxious or stressed. You will need to make the relaxation spin wheel below. Please cut it out and put a split-pin in the middle. You could also paint or draw on a lazy Susan if you want to be more creative. Encourage the young person to spin the wheel and practise doing the relaxation exercise together. Whenever they feel anxious, they can take the relaxation spin wheel out of their pocket or their bag and choose which relaxation strategy to use



Activity 3. Mindfulness.

Aim

- I can explain what mindfulness is.

Success Criteria

- I can recognise when my mind wanders.
- I can label my thoughts.

Stressed, Sad, Anxious or Angry: Mindfulness and Mental Health



Today we are going to be exploring a new subject.

This subject is called **Mindfulness**. We are going to use mindfulness to help us understand **how we are feeling** and how we can help ourselves be more settled and calm.

Understanding how we are feeling and how this can affect our behaviour is very important. It can help us feel more calm and settled.

It can also help us manage and live with our more difficult emotions such as:

feeling stressed,

feeling anxious,

feeling sad,

feeling angry.

There are no 'good' or 'bad' feelings!

What is Mindfulness?



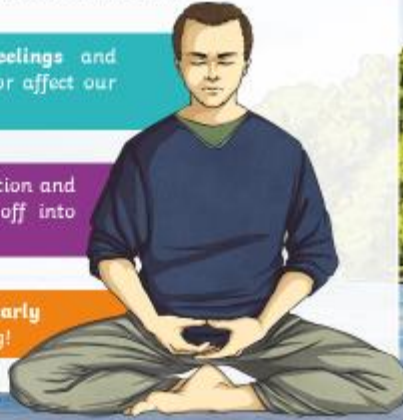
Mindfulness is a practice and discipline that allows us to explore our experience.

Mindfulness is a form of training where we train ourselves to be focused, settled and calm.

We learn to focus on our **thoughts, feelings and physical feelings** and see how they shape or affect our mood and behaviour.

In mindfulness we are learning to pay attention and to notice when our mind has wandered off into thinking and day dreaming.

Psychologists have found that we spend **nearly half of our day** not focused but daydreaming!



The Scattered Mind



Our minds can be full of thoughts.

It is OK to be scattered but it can make it very difficult to concentrate on one thing.



Now open your eyes. What happened to your concentration?

Allow the memories of doing this to appear. Now try and keep focusing on this activity.

This lack of focus is often described as **The Scattered Mind** in mindfulness.

You have homework to do.

You need your

brother, sister or friend is doing something that annoys you.

The Scattered Mind



Having a scattered mind is OK. Our minds will wander, we will get distracted.

However, a scattered mind affects more than our concentration.
It can also affect how we are feeling.

The psychologists who discovered that we spend nearly half of our days **daydreaming**, found that when our minds are **scattered**, we are more likely to feel **stressed, anxious, sad or angry**.



This is because instead of experiencing our life as it is, we get caught up in **thinking, worrying and being anxious** about **how things were or how they could be**.



Thought Clouds



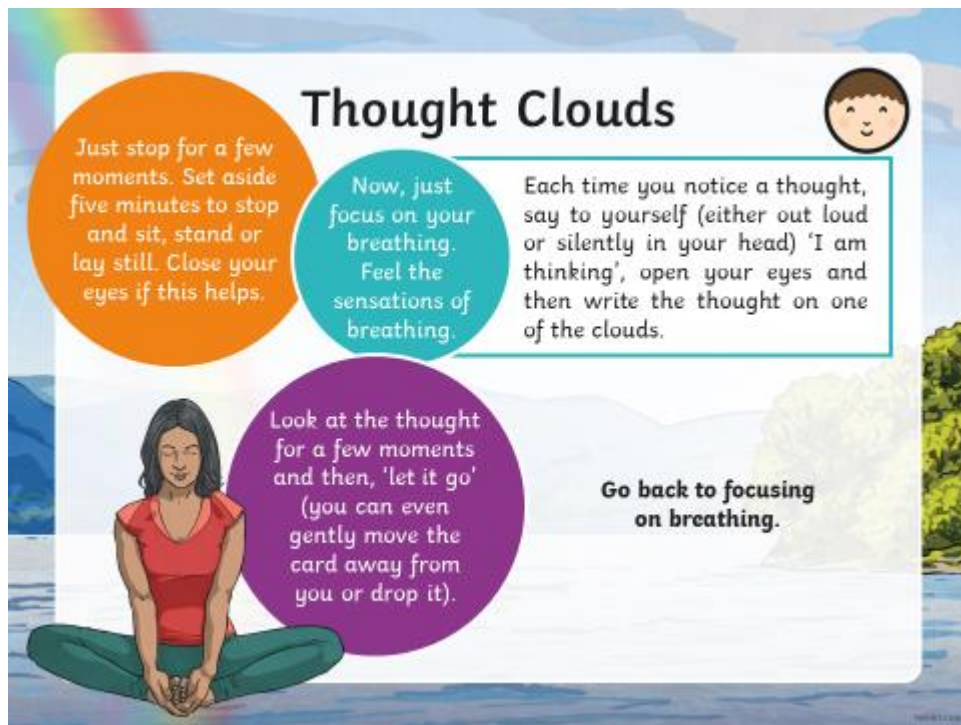
Practicing mindfulness can be difficult. Sometimes, no matter how hard we try to settle the mind, we keep getting caught up in our thoughts.

Instead of just noticing that we are thinking, our mind takes over and before we know it, we are stuck in a whirlwind of thoughts about all kinds of things.

Thoughts become more thoughts and they become more thoughts! Soon we can feel like all we have are thoughts!

To help us be more mindful, we can use the Thought Clouds to help us recognise and let go of thoughts.

This is a very important part of being mindful. We are not ignoring our thoughts, but we are not being carried away by them either.



The image shows a 'Thought Clouds' activity card. At the top left, there is a circular logo with the text 'STEP FORWARD 4 SEND' and 'CELEBRATING DIFFERENCE' and 'PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD - PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE'. The card itself has a background of a landscape with a rainbow, mountains, and a lake. A woman is sitting in a meditative pose on the left. The title 'Thought Clouds' is at the top center, with a small cartoon face icon to its right. There are four colored circles containing instructions: an orange circle for preparation, a teal circle for focusing on breathing, a purple circle for letting thoughts go, and a white box with a teal border for writing thoughts. A final instruction 'Go back to focusing on breathing.' is written in bold black text.

Thought Clouds

Just stop for a few moments. Set aside five minutes to stop and sit, stand or lay still. Close your eyes if this helps.

Now, just focus on your breathing. Feel the sensations of breathing.

Each time you notice a thought, say to yourself (either out loud or silently in your head) 'I am thinking', open your eyes and then write the thought on one of the clouds.

Look at the thought for a few moments and then, 'let it go' (you can even gently move the card away from you or drop it).

Go back to focusing on breathing.

Activity 4. Meditation

Breathing and Thinking Guided Meditation

Read the script aloud in a calm, soft, steady voice and maintain a slow pace.

Settling

We are now going to start looking at our experiences more closely. We are going to do a short meditation.

Meditation is a practice, a way of learning to focus and pay attention. We are going to use meditation to help us focus on our breathing and thinking.

Did you know the breath can tell us how we are feeling and that just by focusing on it, the breath can help calm us?

To help us settle, we need to get into a good sitting position. This is a position where we can stay quite still, so make sure you are comfy. Have a good wriggle and a stretch to get a comfy seated position. If you can, try not to slouch. We want to be alert and awake.

Main Practice

Now we start by simply concentrating on the breath.

Just breath in and just breath out.

Where can you feel the breath moving? Is it in the stomach? Is it in the chest? Maybe it's at the nose or the mouth. It doesn't matter where it is, just how you feel the breath and where you feel the breath.'

Breathe in, breathe out. How does the breath feel?

Is it smooth? Is it slow?

Maybe the breath feels tight? Maybe it's fast?

However, your breathing is OK. We don't need to change the breath, we don't need to try and make it calm.

Breathe in, breathe out. How does the breath feel?

If you get distracted, if you get caught in daydreaming or thinking, then that is OK. We just start again and focus on the next breath.

Breathe in, breathe out. How does the breath feel?

And now just try focusing on the breath in silence for a few moments.

If you daydream, that's OK. Whenever this happens we just notice this and refocus our attention on the next breath.

Allow a few moments of relative silence for the children to concentrate on their breath. You can periodically just repeat the phrase 'breathing in, breathing out' to help maintain focus.

Breathe in, breathe out. Nothing to get right. Just breathing.

Activity 5. Calm Jar

Create Your Own Calm Jar

Being mindful is all about learning to pay attention.

By focusing our thoughts, we can help settle the mind.

This is particularly important when we are facing strong and difficult emotions.

When we are **stressed, anxious, sad** or **angry**, we can quickly get carried away by our emotions and this can affect our mood and behaviour.

However, by being mindful we can help focus and settle the mind when we experience difficult emotions.

This activity allows us to be creative and to make a 'Calm Jar'. This is a simple mindful tool that we can use to help us calm when we feel **stressed, anxious, sad, angry** or just out of sorts.



Preparation

You will need:

- An empty and clean jam jar or bottle
- Fine glitter or glitter shapes
- Water
- Food colouring (optional)
- Glitter glue

Instructions (please ask for help from an adult when making the jar):

- 1** Start by filling the jar or bottle with water almost to the top. Remember to leave a little space.
- 2** Then add the glitter glue to the jar. You can squeeze in as much as you like. It is your Calm Jar, so be creative!
- 3** Next, add the extra glitter and glitter shapes to the jar. Perhaps notice how cloudy and mixed up the water and glitter has become.
- 4** If you are using the food colouring, add a few drops to the water now.
- 5** Finally, screw on the lid of the jar or bottle. Make sure it is tight and leak proof!

Create Your Own Calm Jar

Using the Calm Jar

When we are **stressed, anxious, sad** or **angry**, our mind is like the Calm Jar when it is shaken up.

Our thoughts become busy and mixed up. If we get caught up in our stresses and problems, it is like shaking the jar and it just keeps our thoughts busy and not calm.

When we feel stressed we can use the calm jar to help us settle.

- 1** Start by picking the jar up and giving it a good shake. Allow the glitter to get mixed up and 'busy'.
- 2** Then, place the jar on a table or flat surface and focus on the movement inside the jar. Watch as it swirls and moves.
- 3** Just keep focusing your attention on the jar, watching as it settles. There is nothing else to do. Just giving yourself a few minutes to calm.
- 4** If the mind wanders, that is OK. Nothing has gone wrong. Just gently bring your focus back to the jar.
- 5** See if you can stay focused on the water until it settles and becomes still.
- 6** Then, notice how you feel. You will probably notice that you feel a little calmer, more settled.
- 7** If not, you can begin again, shaking the jar and watching it settle.

Activities from Twinkl

Twinkl has a range of anxiety activities including flashcards, relaxation techniques, and other helpful suggestions for children can dealing with worries. Please click on the link below:

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/search> and search 'anxiety and stress activity pack'

