



Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service (EPS) Guidance and Support to Schools

Covid-19 (updated 20.03.2020)

Opening Statement

Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service is committed to supporting the emotional needs and well-being of all who access our support. This extends to children and young people, parents and carers, families, schools and other professionals who we may work alongside.

We are currently facing uncertain times as we all try to understand the impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Many people will be feeling anxious, confused, stressed and/or scared. There is uncertainty about what may happen next in terms of protecting our health, going to work, taking our children to school and socialising with others. These difficult feelings and this sense of being unsettled is something which affects us all.

We are sure many of you are developing your own systems, resources and methods of sharing information about the virus, its impact and our need to maintain good physical and mental health, with children and their families. The EPS will endeavour to continue circulating relevant advice, guidance and useful tips we feel may be helpful in the current context, hopefully without overwhelming you. We are exploring the most appropriate platforms to achieve this.

Themes around anxiety, coping with change and promoting wellbeing will be the initial focus. See 'Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service' Guidance – Keeping Emotionally Well During Difficult Times.

What the Warwickshire EPS Can Offer

Warwickshire Educational Psychologists are continuing to work but in a virtual capacity at present. We continue to offer critical incident support to schools and settings for example in managing loss and bereavement. In the event of a critical incident please phone 01926 742921. A business support assistant will take your details and an outline of the incident. You will be contacted by an Educational Psychologist who will discuss the situation with you, provide immediate advice and agree a course of action.

We are currently exploring how best to provide support via telephone and/or video consultations and will update you with details during the next week or so.

The nature of this work may cover, for example:

- Staff supervision and coaching (e.g. Head Teacher, SLT, teachers/front line colleagues)
- Staff problem-solving and consultations
- Wellbeing and anxiety management support for staff, parents and children
- Virtual workshops and CPD opportunities

We hope you can all keep safe and well during this time.

The latest messages shared by Warwickshire Local Authority to Schools

(as at 20.03.2020)

Key Workers, EHCPs, Vulnerable Pupils

The government has now defined the sectors and key workers and the cohorts of children that should attend school. This detail is set out by the government in guidance published in the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Free School Meals

The DfE have published the COVID-19: free school meals guidance for schools. The guidance outlines what schools should do to make sure eligible pupils have continued access to free school meals:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools>

Support is also available from WCC's local welfare scheme. The scheme provides basic and essential help for food and energy. This is given either in emergency food parcels or with credit for energy. Please signpost families to the following website:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/localwelfarescheme>

Designated Teachers for Children Looked After

Key pieces of information regarding Warwickshire's children looked after (CLA) from the Warwickshire Virtual School:

- Unless displaying symptoms themselves or with carers who are self-isolating, ALL CLA need to be in school
- Where CLA are not in school the usual attendance follow up measures need to be taken
- PEP reviews need to continue on a termly basis. This is likely to be via telephone to all of the relevant contributors.

- No CLA should be excluded from school. It is understandable that our CLA feel unsettled, scared, confused. Staff working with them need to be attuned to this and support accordingly. If you have staff who find CLA behaviours challenging, please contact the Virtual School and we will provide advice and support as appropriate at this time.

Promoting Wellbeing

Top Tips

1. Give some time to talk to others and process what is happening
2. *BUT* make sure Coronavirus is not the only thing you talk about
3. Monitor your access to social media and the news
4. Remember that people react differently to significant events
5. Keep to daily routines as much as possible

For Adults

- Coronavirus and your wellbeing, by Mind UK:
<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>
- 5 ways to wellbeing, by Mindkit:
<https://www.mindkit.org.uk/5-ways-to-wellbeing/>
- Samaritans, Call 116 123,
<https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/>
- National Health Service:
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- World Health Organisation Factsheet to support Wellbeing:
https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/coping-with-stress.pdf?sfvrsn=9845bc3a_2
- Looking After your Mental Health – Mental Health Foundation:
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak>

For Children and Young People

- <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
- <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/>
- <https://gozen.com/allprograms/> (programmes to manage stress and build resilience)

- <https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga>
- <https://www.mindfulschools.org/free-online-mindfulness-class-for-kids/>

See 'Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service' Guidance – **Keeping Emotionally Well During Difficult Times**

Talking to Children and Young People About Coronavirus

As summarised by the British Psychological Society, it is important to:

- Be truthful but remember your child's age.
- Allow children to ask questions.
- Try to manage your own worries.
- Give practical guidance e.g. how to wash your hands.

Helpful links:

Advice on talking to children about Coronavirus, by British Psychological Society:
<https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/Policy/Policy%20-%20Files/Talking%20to%20children%20about%20Coronavirus.pdf>

How to talk to your child about coronavirus, by Unicef:
<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-talk-your-child-about-coronavirus-covid-19>

Child-friendly explanation of Coronavirus for Primary age students:
https://660919d3-b85b-43c3-a3ad-3de6a9d37099.filesusr.com/ugd/64c685_319c5acf38d34604b537ac9fae37fc80.pdf

Information video on Coronavirus for Primary age children (KS2), by Brainpop:
<https://www.brainpop.com/health/diseasesinjuriesandconditions/coronavirus/>

Information video on Coronavirus for older children/adults, by WHO:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOV1aBVYKGA&feature=youtu.be>

Child Friendly (primary) Social Story by ELSA Support:
<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/coronavirus-story-for-children/>

Video explaining Coronavirus for young people:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOV1aBVYKGA&feature=youtu.be>,

Social Story: <https://carolgraysocialstories.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Pandemics-and-the-Coronavirus.pdf>