



Salvesen Mindroom Centre
support • inform • empower

BACK TO SCHOOL PARENT AND CARER JOURNAL



Salvesen Mindroom Centre recognises that for many weeks/months, parents and carers have been staying at home with their children of all ages.

From speaking with parents and carers we understand this experience has been different for everyone.

You may have been directly affected by the virus, losing a loved one, family member or friend. Your child may have been happier at home with you, and may not be looking forward to school. Some will have found home 'teaching' fun and others will have truly struggled. Some will not have been able to learn at home at all.

We hope this journal will be a helpful space where you can note your experiences and observations about your child or young person. Within the journal we encourage you to think about your own feelings and experiences too.

We hope by reflecting on your experiences and sharing some of this with your child/young person's teachers/ key adults this will support the transition back into learning and school.

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Starter activity

The last few weeks/months will include lots of different memories; some may be positive, and some may be more challenging to think about. Take some time to think back, note your memories and something you are looking forward to below:

One of my favourite memories from the last few weeks/months is

One of my most difficult memories from the last few weeks/months is

One of the things I am most looking forward to in the next month is

Coronavirus, and our understanding

What is your child/young person's understanding of coronavirus?

Has your family suffered the loss of a family member, loved one or friend from the virus?

If you can let key adults know of a loss, they can be prepared to offer support

Suggested activity: My spheres of influence

Over the last few weeks/months, you may have found yourself thinking “what if” about many things.

If we notice our thoughts and try to redirect them to what we can control, this can have a positive impact on our health and well-being.

Write down the things you can control inside the circle and write down the things you can not control outside the circle.

(We have included a couple of examples)



Time at home, the positives and what worked well

Our routine, what worked?

During the isolation period, you spent a lot of time with your child/young person; what worked well?

Key adults can look at how these positives can be incorporated into school routines. We have included an example.

Having opportunities to take regular breaks from learning helped

What did your child/young person enjoy most about their time at home?

You could share this with key adults to see if this can be incorporated into their support to your child.

Time at home, the positives and what worked well

You may feel worried that your child/young person has fallen behind their peers in their learning, you can note those concerns here and share them with the relevant key adults:

It's important to remember that teachers will be aware that learning has been very different recently; they will prepare for that.

What would help to address your concerns?

You can note ideas here and share these with key adults:

Time at home, the challenges

Your child/young person may have found learning at home a real challenge and supporting their learning may have been equally difficult.

You may be feeling worried that your child/young person's social and emotional well-being has been impacted and that this will influence their learning and their relationships with their peers and adults.

You can note those concerns here and share them with the relevant key adults:

What would help to address your concerns?

You can note ideas here and share these with key adults:

Suggested activity: 5-4-3-2-1 grounding activity

The NHS describes mindfulness as paying more attention to the present moment – to your own thoughts and feelings, and to the world around you. This can help improve a person's mental well-being.

If you find that “what if” thoughts are occupying your mind, you can use this 5-step activity to redirect your thoughts.

- **look around and identify 5 things you can see**
- **identify 4 things you can hear**
- **identify 3 things you can feel**
- **identify 2 things you can smell**
- **identify 1 thing you can taste**

With practice, this activity can help you to ‘be in the moment’ and to feel calmer.



Returning to school and feeling prepared

As a parent/carer, what are your main concerns about the return to learning and how can these be addressed?

Returning to learning and school will mark a big change in your current routine, what are your main concerns about this?

What can key adults do to support you and address these concerns?

What are your child/young person's worries about returning to school?

If key adults are aware of these, they can offer support.

Does your child/young person have ideas about what would help them on their return to school?

Returning to school and feeling prepared

You may feel worried about separating from your child/young person and the impact this may have on you.

Your child/young person may also be feeling worried.

You can use the space below to note those concerns:

What could key adults do to address these concerns and support you and your child/young person?

You can note ideas here and share these with key adults:

Suggested activity: STOP Mindfulness activity

Stand up and breathe. Feel your connection to the earth.

Tune in to your body. Lower your gaze. Scan your body and notice physical sensations or emotions. Discharge any unpleasant sensations, emotions or feelings on the out breath. Notice any pleasant ones and let them fill you up on the in breath.

Observe. Lift your eyes and take in your surroundings. Observe something in your environment that is pleasant and be grateful for it and its beauty.

Possibility. Ask yourself what is possible or what is new or what is a forward step.



Financial impact

Many people across Scotland will be experiencing financial loss due to the coronavirus.

This may be a short-term worry, or it could be more long-lasting.

Here are some suggested sites which can offer more information:

Scottish Government, general information on benefits and grants

<https://www.mygov.scot/benefits>

Citizens Advice

<https://www.cas.org.uk>

Money Advice Scotland

<https://www.moneyadvicescotland.org.uk>

Turn2us, benefits calculator

<https://benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk>

Turn2us, grants information

<https://grants-search.turn2us.org.uk>



Suggested activity: 30-3-30 approach

The 30/3/30 approach means you can plan for little interludes throughout the day for activities which can help with grounding, focus or just having a break, here's how it works:

Think of things you can do for 30 seconds

- 5/4/3/2/1 grounding exercise (See page 9)
- Stand up and stretch and shake your arms and legs
- Look out of the window for a change of scene

Think of things you can do for 3 minutes

- Make a cup of tea
- Send a text message to a friend
- Do a longer breathing or mindfulness exercise
- Look up a new recipe for next snack or meal
- Listen to a favourite piece of music

Think of things you can do for 30 minutes

- Yoga stretches
- Your daily exercise, take a walk or go for a run
- Arts & Crafts – drawing, painting, colouring in
- Read a book
- Listen to a podcast
- Play a game
- Have a call or video call with friends or family



References

Please find below references for each of the suggested activities:

Suggested activity, My Spheres of Influence, page 5

The Wellness Society Supported by Jamma International

<https://thewellnesssociety.org>

NHS, Mindfulness quote, page 9

<https://www.nhs.uk>

Suggested activity 5-4-3-2-1 grounding activity, page 9

<https://www.independent.co.uk>

Suggested activity STOP mindfulness, page 12

1 minute mindfulness exercises, Psych Central

<https://psychcentral.com>

Suggested activity, 30-3-30, page 14

Thanks to Edinburgh College Student Wellbeing Team



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