

# The NWR Parents' Network Wellbeing Pack

Issue 1



# Introduction

## Introduction

We have created this pack of information and resources, because we understand how challenging juggling work, parenting and home schooling must be. We will update the pack regularly and share it in as many places as we can so it's accessible.

### **Parent's Network**

A [Yammer Page](#) has been created for Parents to network and help and support each other. We keep an eye on this page each day to answer questions and gather information to resources.

A Microsoft team has also been created, the code to join is 946h6xy - just search for "Parent's Network" in teams and enter the code when prompted. Each Tuesday at 11 there will be the chance to have a coffee break in teams with other parents.

### **Policies and Guidance**

The pack contains a summary of the various family friendly policies and guidance available, with links, to make it easier to navigate to the information you may need over the next few weeks.

### **Case Studies**

You'll also find case studies from colleagues who are learning every day what works, what doesn't work and talking openly about the issues they're trying to address. We want to grow this bank, and if you'd like your story to be included, please contact us on the e mail address below.

### **STEM Activities**

The pack contains STEM resources for different age groups, with information on what you can expect the children to learn and also how you can link that to the railway, so they can understand how it connects to your job too. We will be adding to these resources regularly to try to keep them entertained

### **Additional Learning Resources**

At the back of the pack you'll find a summary of other available learning resources with links. The aim of this section is to make it as easy as possible for you to know what resources are available, rather than having to trawl to find them. We will continue to add to this section and welcome you to share anything you find with the team, so it can be included. We will review the usefulness of these resources to expand and provide more detail, as the pack grows each week.

*Please get in touch with the team if we can help, if you have any ideas or suggestions or things you feel would help you and other parents. The team can be contacted on [earlyengagement@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:earlyengagement@networkrail.co.uk). We will begin to gather the questions we hear most often into one place and will add a Frequently asked questions page into the document soon.*

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# Policies & Guidance (Working from Home)

- a *Guide for Parents*



## Wellbeing and Working from Home.

Many of us are now working from home in order to prevent the spread of Covid-19. For many of us, this means working alongside our children. This guide will provide strategies, policies and guidance for those working from home with children.

## The Parent's Network

It is more important now than ever to find a community to be a part of. We have set up a Yammer group for parents and carers who are working from home with children during the lockdown to give you an opportunity to connect with other parents in similar situations. You can discuss what you have learned about working at home - what's challenged you, what do you enjoy or not enjoy, do you have any tips? We'll also be providing STEM education resources and activities to the group as well as HR policies, support lines, links to external resources and blogs/case studies.

Please participate, support your colleagues, invite others and tell us what you would like to see in the future.

Ctrl and Click the link below to access the Yammer Group  
[Yammer Parent Network](#)

### What will this Document Cover?

- The Parent's Network
- Parental Guides and Policies
- Working from Home Guides
- The Employee Networks
- Helplines



## Parents' Guides and Policies

- [Flexible Working Policy](#) - By offering flexible working arrangements we can support employees to manage their working life with other priorities, including looking after children, caring responsibilities, religious observance, returning from maternity or paternity leave, life long learning, charity work and any other interests
- [Family Friendly Policy and Procedure](#) - The underlying principle of this policy is that we will, whenever possible, support employees to manage their working life and other priorities through enabling these family friendly arrangements
- [Parental Employee Benefits](#) - including child care vouchers & employee assistance
- [Everyone Managing... Carers](#) – Guidance for Carers
- [Diversity & Inclusion Hub](#)

*“it is vital that we take care of our own health and wellbeing”*

### Working from Home

As we deal with the Coronavirus outbreak, it is vital that we take care of our own health and wellbeing. Concerns about the health and wellbeing of friends and family, changes in working patterns and the fast-moving nature of the situation mean many of us will be feeling unsettled. If you feel this way, there are many ways you can reach out for help and support.

## Guides for Working from Home

- [Guidance on working from home](#) – this guide has been developed by Network Rail's Health & Wellbeing and Ergonomics teams. This provides you with useful information for setting up your workspace when working from home.
- [How to make homeworking work for you](#) – this guide by Validium provides guidance on working from home, including tips on developing a routine.
- [My whole self-guide](#) – this guide provides tips on how you can support your mental health whilst working from home.
- [Working from home: stretching & energising](#) – here you will find some useful exercises which can be done from your chair.
- [Managing teams remotely](#) – this Validium guide contains ten top tips for managing team members remotely.
- [Robertson Cooper Resilience tool](#) – use this tool to gain an understanding of your resilience
- [External Support available](#) – here you will find a list of external support and networks
- [Network Rail Wellbeing Hub](#) - the wellbeing hub is kept up to date with guidance and support available



## Need Someone to Talk to?

### Validium

- Network Rail's Employee Assistance Programme is a confidential service reachable 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, available to all Network Rail employees, as a helpline for you to call about issues affecting you at home or in the workplace.
- **Telephone:** 0800 358 4858 or 0330 332 9980
- **NetworkRail dedicated portal:** [www.validium.com/vclub](http://www.validium.com/vclub) Username: NetworkRailPassword: onlinesupport

### Samaritans

- Samaritans are available to talk to 24 hours a day. They're there to listen, no judgement, no pressure, and help you work through what's on your mind.
- **Telephone:** 116 123
- **Website:** <https://www.samaritans.org/>

### Railway Mission

- The Railway Mission is a group of specially trained people who offer support to anyone connected with Britain's railways. If life's journey feels threatened, they offer friendship and an opportunity to talk about problems and explore solutions. For details of local Railway Chaplains, visit the Railway Mission website.
- **Telephone:** 07793 246528
- **Email:** [COVID19@railwaymission.org](mailto:COVID19@railwaymission.org)

### Optima Health

- The Optima Health phone line is available 09:00-17:00 to help answer your general medical questions about Coronavirus, To assist vulnerable colleagues and assess their fitness to work, For line managers supporting both vulnerable colleagues and those self-isolating, For colleagues who have been self-isolating and are wanting to resume work
- **Telephone:** 0330 008 5972

### Vita Virtual Physiotherapy

- Offering virtual physiotherapy appointments to support you when working from home. If you are experiencing any aches and pains, either as a result of recent working from home changes, or something longer-term. A telephone consultation with a physiotherapist will be undertaken and if further consultation is needed you will be provided with details with how to access the virtual service. Details on how this works can be found here.
- **Telephone:** 0800 0833324-Option 5

### Wellbeing Ambassadors

- Route Services Wellbeing Ambassadors are here to offer support to you whether you need guidance and signposting or if you just need someone to talk to.

## Employee Networks

Another great way to talk to like-minded people is by engaging with our Employee Networks. Network Rail has six Employee Networks, that provide an effective way of helping us to reflect and understand the communities we serve. The business has established employee networks to bring people together to support an inclusive environment, help to remove barriers and break down stereotypes and prejudices.

### Our 6 Employee Networks are:

Inspire

CanDo

Cultural Fusion

Multi Faith

Myriad

Archway



# Tea break Tuesday

Join other members of the Parent's Network to have quick cuppa and a chat to share ideas and challenges of balancing work and parenting during this difficult time

Every Tuesday @ 11am

## Microsoft Teams

Join Microsoft Teams Meeting  
+44 20 3321 5223 United Kingdom, London (Toll)  
Conference ID: 456 107 312#  
Local numbers | Reset PIN | Learn more about Teams |  
Meeting options

[Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)





## COVID-19: A Whole New World for a Manager

Lydia Fairman, HR Capability and Development Manager

I manage a team of people who specialise in STEM education, entertaining while educating young people for a living, but how are we coping in these unprecedented times? The last few weeks have been like no other. It was now 5 weeks ago we all started working from home wherever possible, and those with school age children took on the responsibility of home schooling too.

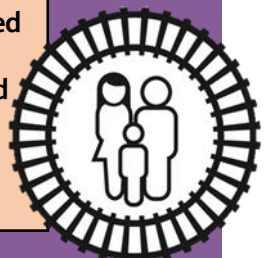
As a manager, my main concern has been to reduce the stresses on those in my team who have children. I don't want them to feel conflicted or pulled in different directions. I didn't want them to feel like they were letting their kids down, or equally their colleagues down. I've tried to tackle this by being open and explicitly giving permission for total flexibility.

We immediately agreed to have short twice daily calls to mark the beginning and end of the day. In the early calls we set out some parameters and I tried to make it clear that I understood that this situation would be challenging. We all committed in the team to always being available for our morning call each day and around that, we'd be flexible and there were no expectations or judgement if people can't join in. We also chat about what we're working on and aiming to get completed within the day or week, to keep pace and deadlines, as the type of work we deliver has changed.

Remote access being restricted added complexity to the situation. After a couple of weeks, we had all established our own routines and now only have our calls to once daily, with a longer planning call when we need/want it. We are all using Microsoft teams for keeping in touch, calls and conferencing and managing our e mails by syncing them twice daily and working offline in-between.

The one thing I've really noticed is everyone is responding to this differently and need different things. One member of the team has asked if they can flex their hours to do some on the weekend when they have remote access, and then they can share the parenting/schooling duties with their partner in the week. They're also working some hours early morning or in the evening (at their request) to take blocks in the day where they can just be with the kids and focused.

We're all working well and the team's productive and delivering. My biggest tip would be trust. My team know I trust them, they are doing the things we need, at the time we need them and we're all supporting each other. It's not perfect, and I'm still very worried they're not switching off enough and that work's blurring into home. We haven't worked out the solution for that yet – it's easy for me as I can shut the door on the office and have no-one else to worry about. If anyone's got any suggestions or anything that's helped them separate work from home, I would love to hear!







## Hints & Tips for Juggling Work And Home Schooling

Lizzie Kelk, HR Project Leader

So, we are in our 4<sup>th</sup> week now of working from home and attempting to entertain / home school a 4-year-old and a 7-year-old, I'd be lying if I said we have it under control but it's getting easier as we learn ways to manage it.

My husband also works for Network Rail so we are both still working, he has also recently volunteered to support the NHS during COVID-19 so this will pose a new challenge for us. There are good days and not so good days, but I remind myself to stay positive and I am truly grateful to my fellow colleagues that are out there keeping the railway running. Here are a few things that might help;

**Create an out of office or signature to let people know.** Example:

*Over the next while I, like many people, will be balancing my work hours with home-schooling my children. This may mean a slight delay in responding or replies at more unusual hours. Thank you for your understanding.*

**Be flexible with your working pattern.** You can try working split shifts to allow balancing your work hours and home schooling, if you do this in a more structured way this will become more manageable and it means you will have time available during the day to dedicate to parenting / learning. Speak to your manager about how this might work.

**Remember to take annual leave.** It might seem strange to book annual leave right now, but we still need a break away from work to relieve the stress of this unusual situation. The annual leave policy has been updated so those caring for children can bring 2021 leave forward.

**Create a plan (but don't worry if it slips a little!).** Children are used to routine at school, so it helps to have some structure to the day, let them help you plan and include a variety of tasks that require different levels of input and plan these around your diary commitments. Don't feel guilty if this plan includes play and movies whilst you are on calls!

**Don't put too much pressure on yourself or compare yourself to others.** You are home learning, not replacing a teacher. Everyone is in different situations with different capacity levels and social media is only a snapshot of someone's day!

**Try and avoid back to back calls.** If you are able to, spread calls / meetings throughout the week. A day can soon become very stressful if you have no time between calls to attend to your child / children. And if they appear on a video call, try not to be embarrassed and introduce them to your colleagues.

**Use the Parent's Network Yammer group!** It is so important to engage with other colleagues right now and keep talking, we will also be posting lots of useful information as well as encouraging others to share their challenges and successes.





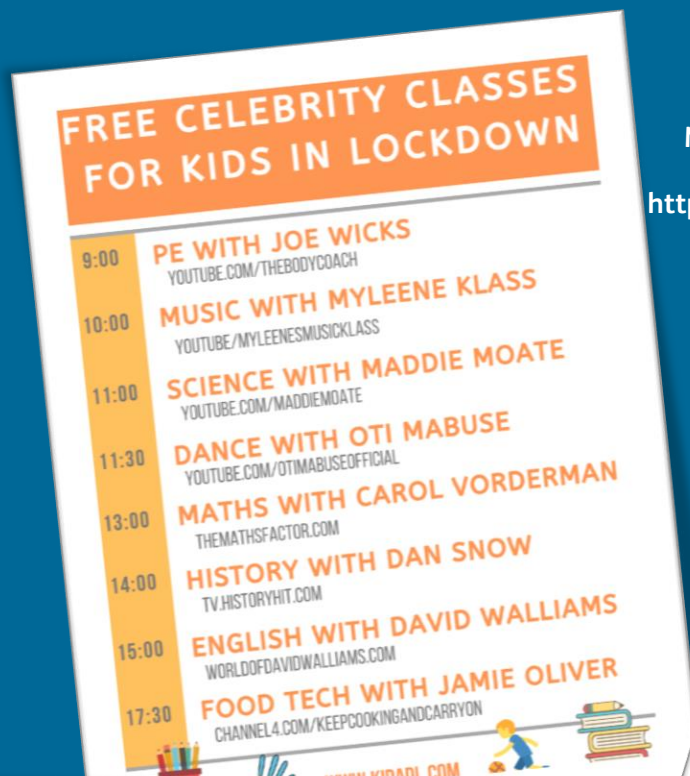
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Lizzie Kelk, HR Project Leader

Tea break Tuesday – every Tuesday @ 11am

Join other members of the Parent's Network for a cuppa and a chat so we can share ideas and challenges of balancing work and home schooling during this difficult time.

[Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)



My go-to resources;

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

Lego Challenges – check out  
The NR Social Media Page  
for different challenges



This was shared with me and it was a good reminder  
to put things in perspective

### Working Remote - COVID 19 Principles

- 1. You are not "Working From Home", you are "At your home, during a crisis, trying to work".
- 2. Your personal physical, mental, and emotional health is far more important than anything else right now.
- 3. You should not try to compensate for lost productivity by working longer hours.
- 4. You will be kind to yourself and not judge how you are coping based on how you see others coping.
- 5. You will be kind to others and not judge how they are coping based on how you are coping.
- 6. Your team's success will not be measured the same way it was when things were normal.

S.T.E.E.M.

Activities

## Time Capsule Activity Sheets

Challenge the creative minds of your children with this COVID-19 activity pack. Whether it's colouring or interviewing their parents, children can create memories to remember 2020 in a positive light!



5-8



9 - 11



12 - 14



15+

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Pencils
- Colouring Pens
- Paint (optional)
- ... and the creative minds of your children!!!

### DURATION:

- 10 – 15 minutes per activity sheet

### LEARNING OUTCOME(s) / RAIL LINK

Consider the following:

- Things do not always go to plan on the railway and resilience and adaptability are too vital qualities often required from our employees. Teaching your children from young how to view to the positives in negative situations can develop these behaviours.
- The rail industry requires more than just technical minds, creativity is key for any job on the railway. Help your children to explore their creative side whilst completing this workbook.

### PARENT INVOLVEMENT (Star Rating)

*A scale the level of involvement from the parent required to complete the task*



Kids D.I.Y.

SUPPORT  
NEEDED...

ALL HANDS  
ON DECK!

Click [HERE](#) to Access the  
'Activity Sheets'



## How to be Safe Around Electricity

BBC Bitesize has created a short lesson teaching the importance of safety when handling electric appliances in the home.



5-8



9 - 11



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### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Laptop/Desktop or Mobiles Device (i.e. iPad)

### DURATION:

- 10 minutes

Click [HERE](#) to Access the Lesson

### LEARNING OUTCOME(s) / RAIL LINK

Consider the following:

- Network Rail is a safety critical company, meaning the safety of our employees and passengers is at the forefront of what we do. 'Everyone Home Safe Every Day' is our promise to the nation, underpinning all our work and activities.
- Children should watch the animated clip, outlining safety considerations to be taken around the home and complete the activity underneath to show their understanding.
- Challenge Children to 'Close Call' any behaviours at home that could be deemed as 'unsafe'.

### PARENT INVOLVEMENT (Star Rating)

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## Balloon Cup Racers

BBC Bitesize has created a short lesson teaching the importance of safety when handling electric appliances in the home.



5-8



9 - 11



12 - 14



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### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Plastic cups (preferably of different sizes)
- Clear Table/Board
- Masking Tape (to create your course)
- Balloons
- Stationery (for cup model design)



### DURATION:

- 15-20 minutes: Model Design
- 5-10 minutes: Course Design
- 15-20 minutes: Practical Task

### LEARNING OUTCOME(s)

- Consider how different cup sizes impact the amount of force needed to move the cup.
  - Children should also consider how their designs impact the weight of the cup and in turn the force required for movement
- **Safety Consideration:** More force may increase the speed, but it will also decrease the control of the cup resulting in the cup falling off the course
  - Children should consider the effect of speed and control on safety.

### RAIL LINK

When designing a train many factors have be accounted such as materials, speed, infrastructure and most importantly safety.

### Consider the following:

- Imaginative designs/add on features can increase the passenger experience on the train, but can too much decrease efficiency?
- Higher Speeds can get passengers from A to B quicker however how does this impact the safety of the passengers?
- Lower Speeds can increase safety but how will the mood of the passengers be affected with an increased journey time?
- The rail infrastructure is varied around the UK. Will different course designs impact the amount of speed and control required to complete the course?

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## Balloon Cup Racers

BBC Bitesize has created a short lesson teaching the importance of safety when handling electric appliances in the home.

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Gather the materials that you need to create your cup and course.
2. Decorate your cup models making sure they are different weights and sizes.
3. Using masking tape, parents will need to create the course. This can include straight lines or curves.
4. Place your cup models at the beginning of the course.
5. Blow up your balloon but do not tie it.
6. Release the air inside the balloon near the first cup to allow it to move.
7. Note how the design of the cup has impacted how much force is required for movement.
8. Repeat step 6 to move your cup around the course.
9. Once your first cup has reached the end of the course, blow up your balloon again to guide the remaining cups around the course.
10. Reflect on how the force needed may have differed to the first cup.

## Don't Tip the Ship!

Create your paper boat and investigate how the size and shape of the model affects the weight it can carry before it sinks!



5-8



9 - 11



12 - 14



15+

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

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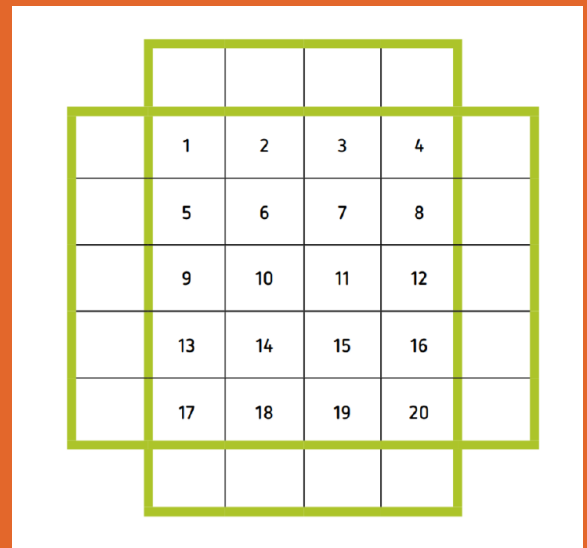
ALL HANDS  
ON DECK!

## Don't Tip the Ship!

Create your paper boat and investigate how the size and shape of the model affects the weight it can carry before it sinks!

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fill a tub or tank with water. Place it on a mat or tray so your surfaces don't get slippery with spilled water.
2. Take a piece of squared paper. Create a rectangle of 6 x 7 squares. Cut this out as shown.
3. Fold up the four sides (shown in green). Tape the corners together to make it watertight.
4. Count the number of squares in the base of the boat.
5. Gently place the boat in the tub of water – it will float!
6. Add weights one after the other until the boat sinks. For best results, place the weights equally and in a balance way around the boat. On a real ship, the weight is carefully spread across it to prevent it from tipping.
7. Now try different designs. Does the size or shape of the boat change how many weights it can hold? The only limit is the size of the tub!



## My Skills My Life Quiz

Acknowledging the skills gap and lack of diversity impacting the railway industry, Network Rail has partnered with WISE (Women in Science and Engineering) to develop the 'My Skills My Life' (MSML) Quiz!



5-8



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12 - 14



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### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Laptop/Desktop or Mobiles Device (i.e. iPad)

### DURATION:

- 10 minutes

Click [HERE](#) to Create a Profile  
and Access the Quiz!

### LEARNING OUTCOME(s) / RAIL LINK

At Network Rail, we firmly believe that you are less likely 'to be what you couldn't see'.

- Complete the personality quiz and read the profiles of female role models whose jobs match your 'career personality type'. Profiles include a description of the role models' job, their pathway to get there and even their salary!
- **FOR THE MUMS:** The Quiz is only as good as the profiles you get to read at the end, and we aim to have as many of female workforce's profiles on their as possible! If you are in STEM-related role and believe you could inspire the future generation of female workers – please create a profile by following the instructions on the link below:

<https://www.wisecampaign.org.uk/what-we-do/expertise/welcome-to-my-skills-my-life/how-you-can-get-involved/create-your-role-model-profile/>

### PARENT INVOLVEMENT (Star Rating)

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## Primary Engineer Leaders Award

'If you were an engineer, what would you do?' is an annual STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) competition that asks students to identify a problem and design a solution, inspiring them to find the engineer they could be and helping design the future of engineering.



5-8



9 - 11



12 - 14



15+

Click [HERE](#) to access more information and the competition!

This year's Leader Award is accompanied with 7 lesson plans, which will support your delivery of the programme and its key outcomes. Should you choose to use them, they will provide you with a structure that helps you develop specific skills and curriculum knowledge in your pupils, whilst they complete set tasks which are required for the competition. Each of these lessons has been mapped across the relevant English National Curriculum and Scottish Curriculum for Excellence areas, such as KS1-4 English, KS1-3 Design & Technology, Art & Design and P1-S3 Literacy and English, Technologies and Expressive Arts. It provides an exciting opportunity for the cross curricular application of key skills, knowledge and understanding learnt in these subjects, through an innovative, successful and entirely personal project. These resources support the delivery of the programme, which offers young people a platform to speak and write fluently and openly about their ideas, solutions and emotions. The development of multiple means of communication, whether it be spoken, written or drawn, allows young people to express themselves with no restriction.

### PARENT INVOLVEMENT (Star Rating)

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### **Engineer Steve**

Internal

<https://networkrail.sharepoint.com/sites/myconnect/news/Pages/National/News/Engineer-Steve.aspx>

External

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcieUuOBJRercdh-Rt\\_h2pc3g61DE5Bpz](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcieUuOBJRercdh-Rt_h2pc3g61DE5Bpz)

### **Khan Academy**

<https://www.khanacademy.org>

Especially good for maths and computing for all ages but other subjects at Secondary level. Note this uses the U.S. grade system but it's mostly common material.

### **BBC Learning**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/coursesearch/>

This site is old and no longer updated and yet there's so much still available, from language learning to BBC Bitesize for revision. No TV licence required except for content on BBC iPlayer.

### **FutureLearn**

<https://www.futurelearn.com>

Free to access 100s of courses, only pay to upgrade if you need a certificate in your name (own account from age 14+ but younger learners can use a parent account).

### **Seneca**

<https://www.senecalearning.com>

For those revising at GCSE or A level. Tons of free revision content. Paid access to higher level material.

### **OpenLearn**

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/>

Free taster courses aimed at those considering Open University, but everyone can access it. Adult level, but some e.g. nature and environment courses could well be of interest to young people.

### **Blockly**

<https://blockly.games>

Learn computer programming skills - fun and free.

### **Scratch**

<https://scratch.mit.edu/explore/projects/games/>

Creative computer programming

### **Ted Ed**

<https://ed.ted.com>

All sorts of engaging educational videos

### **National Geographic Kids**

<https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/>

Activities and quizzes for younger kids.

### **Duolingo**

<https://www.duolingo.com>

Learn languages for free. Web or app.

**The Kids Should See This**

<https://thekidshouldseethis.com>

Wide range of cool educational videos

**Crash Course**

<https://thecrashcourse.com>

You Tube videos on many subjects

**Crash Course Kids**

<https://m.youtube.com/user/crashcoursekids>

As above for a younger audience

**Crest Awards**

<https://www.crestawards.org>

Science awards you can complete from home.

**iDEA Awards**

<https://idea.org.uk>

Digital enterprise award scheme you can complete online.

**Paw Print Badges**

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

Free challenge packs and other downloads. Many activities can be completed indoors. Badges cost but are optional.

**Tinkercad**

<https://www.tinkercad.com>

All kinds of making.

**Prodigy Maths**

<https://www.prodigygame.com>

Is in U.S. grades, but good for UK Primary age.

**CBeebies Radio**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/radio>

Listening activities for the younger ones.

**Nature Detectives**

<https://naturedetectives.woodlandtrust.org.uk/naturedetectives/>

A lot of these can be done in a garden, or if you can get to a remote forest location!

**British Council**

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources/find>

Resources for English language learning

**Oxford Owl for Home**

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/>

Lots of free resources for Primary age

**Big History Project**

<https://www.bighistoryproject.com/home>

Aimed at Secondary age. Multi-disciplinary activities.

**Geography Games**

<https://world-geography-games.com/world.html>

Geography gaming!

**Blue Peter Badges**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/joinin/about-blue-peter-badges>

If you have a stamp and a nearby post box.

**The Artful Parent**

<https://www.facebook.com/artfulparent/>

Good, free art activities

**Red Ted Art**

<https://www.redtedart.com>

Easy arts and crafts for little ones

**The Imagination Tree**

<https://theimaginationtree.com>

Creative art and craft activities for the very youngest.

**Toy Theater**

<https://toytheater.com/>

Educational online games

**DK Find Out**

<https://www.dkfindout.com/uk/?fbclid=IwAR2wJdpSJSITf4do6aPhff8A3tAktmmpaxqZbkgudD49l71ep8-sjXmrac>

Activities and quizzes

**Twinkl**

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

This is more for printouts, and usually at a fee, but they are offering a month of free access to parents in the event of school closures.

**Ruth's Little Kitchen**

<https://www.instagram.com/ruthslittlekitchen/>

Instagram username: ruthslittlekitchen

A cook-along profile for all ages