

Tower Hamlets Healthy Lives update



A safe and responsible return to nursery or school in Tower Hamlets

Many nurseries and schools in Tower Hamlets will begin to increase access for more pupils, or reopen, from the beginning of June. Like parents, we want to see local children back in a safe learning environment so that they can catch up on learning and not fall behind.

A decision about whether a nursery or school will increase pupil numbers is made by the relevant headteacher and governing body – they will only increase pupil numbers, or reopen their school, where it is felt that this can be managed safely.

As a local authority, we are supporting all of our nurseries and schools to understand and manage the risk of infection and we have worked closely with partners to develop options for a safe and responsible return to nurseries and schools.

The decision to send your child to school remains yours, and we recommend that you do send your child to school where you feel able to. It is the best place for them, to learn and to socialise.

From 1 June, some schools will begin to offer places for:

- Nursery
- Reception
- Year 1 and 6
- Face-to-face support for Year 10 and 12 pupils

Your school should contact you to tell you about their plans but, where necessary, you should contact your child's school directly for further information.

Alternatively, you can call our Family Information Service on 020 7364 6495 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm). If you have specific medical questions about sending your child to school you should contact your GP (eg someone in your house is shielding).

Since 23 March many of our schools have actually stayed open, and remain open, for vulnerable children and the children or [key workers](#). We've also run hub schools, which have taken children from multiple schools under one roof; holiday childcare schemes for up to forty children at once, and; operated Phoenix Special School for approximately fifty pupils a day. In all of these education settings, we have experienced no cases of coronavirus infection, and we will extend the careful approach taken here to the phased reopening of all schools in our borough.

Our schools cannot eliminate the risk of infection entirely, but we are adopting sensible measures to manage and reduce the risk. The first defence against infection remains self-isolation. If your child, or someone in your household, has coronavirus or symptoms of coronavirus - do not send your child to school. If a child, or member of staff, becomes ill whilst at school then they will be isolated and sent home.

For the latest information visit: www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/coronavirus/schools

Here's a selection of helpful and informative resources...



STAFF

School reopening - key mental health questions answered

Some school children could begin returning to classrooms from early June, but will the social distancing rules affect their mental health? TES asks Dr Rina Bajaj, a counselling psychologist who works with the [Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families](#), about what we can expect in the next few months.

Some key points covered about how schools can manage the transition are:

- clear communication about timelines for opening the school
- clear guidelines around what social distancing measures will be put in place
- explain to children why social distancing is important and continue to have age appropriate conversations about the coronavirus

[Questions answered >](#)



PARENTS

Unexpected endings and transitions

Below are some helpful tips on managing unexpected endings and transitions. These are taken from a practical guide to support pupils managing change during periods of disruption. It was produced by the Anna Freud Centre, a world leading mental health charity for children and families who have developed and delivered pioneering mental health work for over 60 years.

Communicating honestly

Teachers, parents, carers and school leaders can encourage pupils to look to the future positively, whilst

avoiding making unrealistic promises about when activities will resume or what the future will hold. While honesty and openness about the future is key, optimism and hope that things will get better are also important for promoting a positive outlook and managing worries and anxieties.

Normalising worries and anxieties

It is important to remind pupils that it is normal to feel worried or anxious when activities and supportive relationships end during times of change and uncertainty. It is important to encourage children and young people to talk about their feelings or worries and to give opportunities for discussion about concerns.

Focusing on accomplishments, rather than losses

It can be helpful to frame an ending as a moment of transition and growth, rather than as a loss and final closure.

Sustaining social support networks

Sustaining social ties with friends, siblings and other loved ones (online and by phone) is important to help young people feel connected and supported.

[Full handout >](#)



STAFF

Advice for schools and colleges

Schools and colleges everywhere have had to work in new ways and develop new relationships during lockdown. The Anna Freud Centre has published a series of resources to help support staff and to provide them with information about how to work with children and young people, including those with SEND, along with materials to share with parents and carers.

Resources on staff well-being and managing unexpected endings and transitions can be found, along with coping with anxiety and worry, and how to look after ourselves and each other.

[Access resources >](#)



PARENTS

Easy read advice for parents of SEND children

This guide provides advice for SEND children and young people on how to look after their mental health and well-being during COVID-19. It helps to explain what the virus is and how to manage the anxiety around it, including ways to stay well, such as:

- Keeping in touch with people
- Looking after your body by eating healthy food, drinking enough water and exercising at home
- Looking after your feelings by thinking of things that make you happy and talking about your worries to someone you trust
- Thinking about your new routine, making a plan of things you want to do in the day and making sure you get enough sleep
- Doing things you enjoy
- Finding time to relax
- Enjoying nature
- Try not to be worried by the news

[Full resources >](#)



STAFF

Schools in Mind

Schools in Mind is a free network from the Anna Freud Centre, for school staff and allied professionals. It shares practical, academic and clinical expertise regarding the well-being and mental health issues that affect schools.

The network provides a trusted source of up-to-date and accessible information and resources that school leaders, teachers and support staff can use to support the mental health and well-being of children and young people.



PARENTS

Six ways to cope with lockdown loss

Coronavirus has brought loss into all of our lives. Even if we have been fortunate enough not to lose someone close to us, we are all dealing with loss of some kind.

In only a few short weeks, life has been turned upside down. Many of our routines have changed overnight. Many of the people we rely on have become distanced from us, or are only available on our phone or through computer screens.

BBC Bitesize, with the Anna Freud Centre, looks at how we can find ways forward in these strange times by:

- Taking time to adapt
- Feeling its OK to not be OK
- Making sure we have things to look forward to
- Realising doing some things differently are actually better than before
- Holding each other in mind
- Looking to the future

[Full article >](#)

Good days in unusual times

STAFF

Helpful reading from the Anna Freud Centre

This book is for all children during these unusual times. It is not much fun when you cannot do the things you usually enjoy. In this book, the Anna Freud Centre team give you tips on how to take care of yourself and have good days during this unusual time.

[Have good days >](#)

Here's a selection of fun activities for you and your family...



The world's largest tulip garden

The natural world is bursting with colour and beauty. Here are some great ways to experience it from home. Keukenhof, just outside Amsterdam, is the world's largest bulb-flower garden and boasts more than 800 varieties of tulips.

[Tulip garden this way >](#)



Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland

Experience the different scenes of Giant's Causeway and the County Antrim coast from the comfort of your sofa.

[Take a virtual tour >](#)



Some of the best botanical gardens in the world

If you like to grow plants in your home, it makes sense to get inspired by the great outdoors. While you can learn a lot about a region's history through its museums and galleries, you can really see where everything started by getting up close to its native plants.

[Botanical beauty >](#)



Anglesey Abbey Gardens

Take in the beauty of the herbaceous garden at Anglesey Abbey. There are neat rows of white and blue hyacinths to admire, and even a statue of Father Time. The gardens are always changing with the seasons, so it might look a little different when they open their doors again.

[View the gardens >](#)



RAF Museum poster competition

The RAF Museum would like children, young people and adults to design a poster highlighting all of their favourite parts of the RAF Museum.

The best designs will be used as part of the re-opening advertising campaign, with the winners of each category receiving a prize bundle worth £100 from the RAF Museum shop.

There is a poster resource pack to help you plan your design. The competition closes on **Friday 5 June** and the age categories are:

- Under 10's
- Ten to 18
- Over 18's

[Poster resource pack >](#)

[More information >](#)

Here's a selection of fun activities for you and your family...



The Secret Garden competition

The Secret Garden film release has been delayed due to events. The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) have therefore decided to extend the submission date for their Secret Garden competition.

The competition asks children to imagine they have discovered a Secret Garden and to either draw, paint or create a collage of plants, wildlife or other features that they might see.

The winner will have a chance to see their garden or elements of it brought to life in their community space. There are also opportunities to win a movie goody bag too. Good Luck!

[Secret Garden competition >](#)



The Secret Garden origami

This step-by-step guide provides instructions on how to make your origami butterfly and includes textured paper designs to print and use.



The Secret Garden activity sheet

This Secret Garden activity sheet contains a spot the difference activity, as well as anagrams, dot-to-dot, and a word search.



Spotter guides from the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)

The RHS' school gardening campaign has developed activities to help you identify different tree leaves and spring flowers. It is designed to help participants both young and old explore their local natural environment and to identify and name common trees and plants.

Here's a selection of fun activities for you and your family...

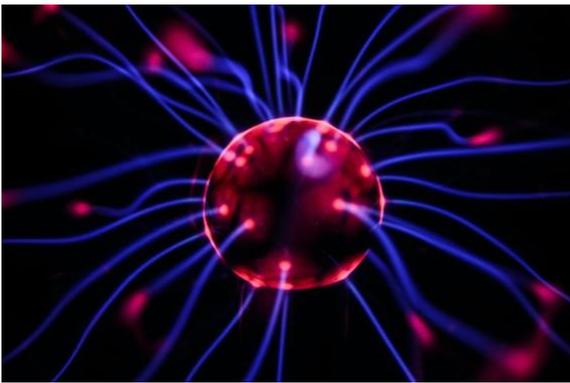


A global film festival

Coronavirus has meant that most of this year's film festivals are not able to go ahead, so they have all teamed up for a 10-day online event called We Are One: A Global Film Festival. It combines Cannes, Tribeca, Berlin, and some smaller festivals, who do not usually get lots of publicity.

- There will be a single YouTube channel broadcasting continuously until **Sunday 7 June**
- Over 100 films, 13 world premieres and 31 online premieres
- All FREE to watch

[Get watching >](#)



Mystery Science

Mystery Science offers lessons that inspire kids to love science. The visuals and activity have all been prepared for parents and teachers and free membership is available to teachers who haven't tried Mystery Science yet.

[More science here >](#)



Free family films

Into Film have a wide range of films available to stream for free within the UK. All films come with recommended viewing ages and talking points and many have additional educational resources too. Into Film puts film at the heart of the educational and personal development of children and young people across the UK.

[Free films >](#)

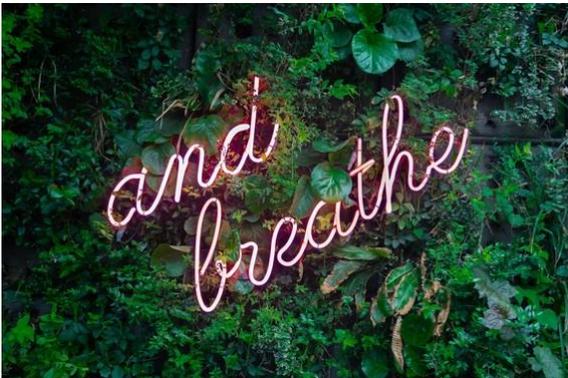


National Theatre Live

The Southbank institution has many live theatre recordings. Now, one will be released per week to stream for free on its YouTube channel. Full length plays are released every Thursday.

[National Theatre >](#)

Here's a selection of fun activities for you and your family...



Free health and wellbeing toolkit

This new online toolkit will help you support children's health and wellbeing with a particular focus on mental health, building the resilience, self-esteem, kindness and confidence they need at this time.

You will need to request login details via the main website. You will then be sent the information required to fully login and access the lessons.

[Wellbeing resources >](#)



Edinburgh Zoo's live webcam of the rockhopper penguins

Edinburgh Zoo has 24 rockhopper penguins who are easy to spot among the rest of their penguin colony. Look for their spectacular yellow feathers and bright red eyes. They do not waddle like other penguins, they hop from rock to rock, making them particularly fun to watch 🐧

[Edinburgh Zoo >](#)



The Royal Albert Home

The Royal Albert Hall has been around for the nation for almost 150 years and in these extraordinary times closing their doors was the best way to look after the world. But why should that stop them from bringing you some of the world's most talented artists?

The Royal Albert Home will see artists sharing their work from their homes through their free streaming programme.

[Take a look >](#)



Baked citrus pears and apples

A healthy dessert as a treat is sometimes just what you need. If you have fruit such as pears or apples to use up, consider baking them in the oven with some spices. Fruit that is a bit past its best will still be fine in this recipe. This delicious heart-healthy dish is a perfect warm dessert for cooler evenings.

[Sweet and healthy recipe >](#)

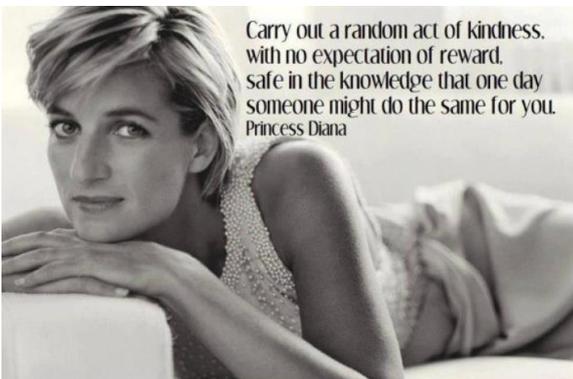


Virtual tour of The British Museum

When it comes to virtual tours, you are spoilt for choice at The British Museum. As well as a Google Street View tour of the museum's exterior, there is one which features several of its exhibition rooms. Each room spotlights a particular exhibit of interest, with links to further information about the artefacts.

[British Museum >](#)

And remember...



"Carry out a random act of kindness, with no expectation of reward, safe in the knowledge that one day someone might do the same for you."

Princess Diana
