

Suffolk County Council – Schools Advice – Homeworking in the C19 situation

HOMWORKING – HOW CAN I STAY SAFE AND WELL AT MY WORKSTATION?

Where possible, you should try to recreate an office type set up at home, as per below:

- Work at a desk and sit on an adjustable desk chair.
- Plug your laptop into a separate monitor, and use a separate mouse and keyboard, unless you can use the laptop keyboard; or
- Use a laptop stand with a separate keyboard and mouse (if no separate screen is available)
- If you don't have the equipment mentioned above and you think you need it, you should discuss this with your line manager / SLT / Headteacher
- For larger items, like chairs or height adjustable desks, the [guidance from the HSE](#) states that staff should try other ways to create a comfortable working environment such as using cushions and creating a temporary raised desk do stand at whilst working.

Do a self-assessment:

You should consider doing a workstation self-assessment, which you can find [HERE](#). The self-assessment can highlight where you may need to readjust your workstation to minimise the risk of developing aches and pains.

If you do experience aches and pains, we would normally recommend you contact your H&S Advisor to see if a Computer Workstation Assessor is available to do an assessment at your desk at school. However, the Computer Workstation Assessors are not able to come to your home to do an assessment. They may, however, be able to provide advice if you send them a picture or video of you at your workstation. If you are having difficulties, please contact nina.bickerton@suffolk.gov.uk.

You can find more information about DSE issues, exercises at your desk, back care advice and more, [HERE](#).

Helpful tips

When working from home for a prolonged period of time, there are few tips that will help you to reduce risk of developing aches and pains:

1. **Take short, frequent breaks.** This is even more important if you don't have an ideal setup as described above. Breaks can improve productivity and wellbeing, as well as

reducing aches and pains. You could use a phone app to remind you. The recommendation is at least 5 minutes away from the screen every hour.

2. **Stretch and exercise.** Your frequent breaks could be to simply stand up and do a few stretches or other forms of exercise. This can also be something you do when on the phone, listening to a meeting or a webinar. And it is more important than ever to ensure you get daily exercise that raises your heart rate and increases your breathing.
3. **Create a work routine.** Create time between when you are working and when you are off work is important. This means turning off your methods of communication outside working hours, and it can help to create a workspace separate either in a specific room, so you can “close the door” to work. Or by packing away your laptop and other work equipment away at the end of the day.
4. **Eat well and stay hydrated.** Make sure you take a lunchbreak every day. It can be easier to lose track of time when working from home, so you may need to set a reminder for yourself. You may also forget to take the break to have a drink as you don't have colleagues around you to remind you when they go for a drink.

This advice article has been recreated from SCC Corporate AskHR pages. Non-school links or advice has been removed and school-based information included instead.