

Thursday 26th November 2020.



**TEES VALLEY**  
**EDUCATION**  
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### **Introducing Ollee – a virtual friend (ParentZone/BBC Children In Need)**

Dear Parent/Carer,

The coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdown is an unprecedented situation in modern times. It is hard to gauge the full impact that the situation is having on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Pupils' experiences of the lockdown period will have been very varied. For some, it will mostly have been a safe and enjoyable time. For others, it will have been challenging or traumatic. Schools and teachers are used to supporting their pupils through challenges that they face in life – the current situation will amplify those situations many times over.

Ollee is a digital friend for children aged 8-11, created by Parent Zone and funded by BBC Children in Need's A Million & Me initiative, which aims to make a difference to children's emotional wellbeing.

It's designed to help children reflect on how they feel and to process their experiences with the support and help of their parents and carers – and it does this by offering them advice about a range of subjects: school, family, friends, their body, the internet and the world.

For each of these subjects, children can choose an emotion that matches how they feel about it: happy, angry, sad, confused, frustrated, stressed or worried.

Next, they can choose from a list of topics – for instance, a child who was worried about school might be able to select 'I haven't done my homework' as the cause of their worry. Finally, they'll see a page of advice about the topic, presented in child-friendly bite-sized chunks they can read then or save for later.

You can more information and download the Ollee app here: <https://parentzone.org.uk/Ollee>

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff at your academy.

Yours sincerely  
Mrs G. Wilson & Mrs L. Stogdale

Mrs Louise Stogdale and Mrs. Gillian Wilson  
On behalf of the Welfare Teams across the Trust