

connecting by video calls

Video calls can be a great way for generations to connect when face-to-face visits are restricted. However, we do recommend spending some time planning the call to ensure that all participants get the most out of it. Here are some top tips to help you.

Top tips:

- Plan call in advance – the structure, the timings, who is leading which section.
- Discussion permissions in advance. Some schools and care homes may need additional consent to be involved in a virtual call.
- Test the sound and camera in advance of the call and if possible have a wide angle webcam and a separate microphone. A separate microphone can be placed in the middle of those speaking but check Covid-19 procedures for passing it around .
- Try to only have one voice speaking at once and limit background noise (especially if you don't have a separate microphone).
- Ensure everyone speaks loudly, clearly and not too fast.
- Ensure there is a lead adult from the school/ youth group and member of staff from the care home present at **all** times.
- Singing a song to one another can be lovely but it's difficult to sing together over a virtual call.
- Discuss together how familiar children and older adults are with virtual calls. Particularly for those living with dementia, this may be confusing and need some preparation work .
- Laptops could be connected to a TV screen to increase the size of the screen. A HDMI cable will most likely be needed for this. Position the webcam near the TV screen so that residents are looking in the same direction.
- For more in depth conversations, smaller groups work better than larger groups.
- Posters/ large signs saying 'hello' or 'goodbye' can be a lovely added visual to a virtual call.