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Dear Parents and Carers,

Lots of people are feeling stressed, overwhelmed and under pressure by everything that's happening at the moment. This includes the work being sent home for your child. I wanted to just give my perspective on it all as a Headteacher and I hope this can help with that somewhat.

A few points to note first:

- 1) This is not home schooling. This is an unprecedented emergency situation impacting on the whole world. Let's keep perspective. This is, at best, distance learning.
- 2) You are, and always have been, your child's primary educator. If you decide that your child isn't going to engage with anything sent home and is going to spend the entire period playing in the dirt, or baking, or watching TV, then that is your choice. That is your right. There is nothing to stress or feel guilty about.
- 3) Schools don't know what they're doing either. They had no notice, no preparation time and we were NOT told to 'continue to plan lessons as normal and just send them home' – that's NOT possible. We gathered a range of activities that we thought might be of use at home. Activities that children would hopefully be able to undertake independently.
- 4) It is absolutely not possible to facilitate distance learning with a primary aged child and work from home at the same time. The very idea is nonsense. If you're trying to do that, stop now. You can certainly have activities where your child learns, but your focus is your job, and survival. Stop trying to be superheroes.

So, answers to a few questions we've been asked this week:

My school has sent home lots of physical work. Pages and pages, hours and hours. How am I supposed to get through it all?!

You're not, don't try. Your child's teacher spent a couple of hours in utter panic gathering things to send home so they could say they did their best and there wasn't a lot of complaints that enough didn't go home. It's not a competition, or a race, it's unlikely the teacher will even manage to look at it all.

My school keeps posting ideas on the school website, what am I supposed to do?

These are suggestions and ideas because the school is worried they're not offering enough. Use them if they suit you, don't if they don't suit. No one will know!

I'm not doing any work with my kids. All they're doing is building Lego, cooking and playing outside.

All of this is learning -very valuable learning. Give yourself and them a break.



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How can I get three different lots of work done with 3 different kids of different ages?

You can't, stop trying. If they're old enough, try to get them to do little bits independently. Otherwise try to do something they can all engage with, reading a story together, some free writing, baking, learning to use the washing machine, load and unload the dishwasher, learning to vacuum! etc.

So what's the bare minimum you'd expect?

My ideal for the children in our school?

- A bit of reading every day (independent or to them or via audiobook etc). David Walliams is releasing a free audio book a day which I'm sure all children will love.
- Some free writing now and then. If they'll keep a diary or something, great. If not, would they draw a comic? A book review something they have read or listened to? A film review for any movies they might
- Practical hands on maths. Be that via cooking, cleaning, outside or some maths games, physical or digital.
- Some fine motor work. Lego, cutting, playdough, tidying up small toys.
- Physical exercise everyday – Joe Wicks is great!
- Some art/music where possible through the week. Doesn't need to be guided.
- If younger, lots of imaginative free play, the more independent the better.

You are doing enough. You are loving your kids and supporting them through a difficult time. Look after yourself. Minimising stress is absolutely vital in a time like this for mental health. Don't let this be something that stresses you. Only you can control that by accepting it is in your circle of control, you are the primary educator and this is all your call.

Please remember that children eligible for Free School Meals can collect a picnic bag from school each day available from 11am, once things have calmed down in shops we hope to put together weekly lunch boxes for families eligible.

If you are concerned you can contact Mrs Evans during school hours on 07402169936 via email aeans@boarshawprimary.co.uk, (anytime) or your child's class teacher via Dojo or email safeguarding@boarshawprimary.co.uk where a member of the school Senior Leadership and Safeguarding team will pick it up.

Take care

Jackie Harland

Head Teacher