

Wednesday 25th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, we want to send our thoughts and best wishes to you and your families during this difficult time. Lots of people are feeling overwhelmed and under pressure by everything that's happening. This includes the work sent home for your child.

This is not home-schooling. This is an unprecedented emergency situation impacting on the whole world. This is, at best, distance learning. For many, teaching your child at home is something you've never had to do before, so it is important to remember that your days do not have to be perfect or like a regular 'school day'. We have put together an example schedule to show a possible structure of how time could be spent at home.

Life learning skills are just as important, so spend time making cakes, cooking dinner together, creating art projects, and provide opportunities to build, plan and develop. A discussion / debate / learning opportunity can be found in almost every situation to stretch and challenge their thinking. "Why do you think that?" is a great lead in question.

You are, and always have been, your child's primary educator. If you decide that your child isn't going to engage with something sent home and is going to spend their time differently, then that is your choice. That is your right. There is nothing to feel guilty about.

It is absolutely not possible to facilitate distance learning with a primary aged child and work from home at the same time. 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.

Please never underestimate how phenomenally intuitive your child is. They may not express their feelings normally, but regular health checks on how they are interpreting the news/world events would be wise. Fear and worry can easily become a dominating force. Where possible, have them working in public spaces in your house. Avoid hours upon hours alone in their bedrooms.

Please remember that the school is only open for those MOST in need. The government has been very clear on this. If the child can safely be at home supervised, then they need to be! If you are working from home, or not classified as a key worker, your child does not come to school. If you are a key worker, but have suitable childcare support in place, your child does not come to school. There is a collective, community responsibility here to ensure we stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives. If we overwhelm the closed schools who are providing emergency support, we risk infection spreading and more and more school staff placed into isolation or worse.

We have a brilliant staff and work ethos. We are asking you to respect them. We appreciate this is a hugely stressful time for all. But remember, our team of staff are leaving their families every day so they can support the fight to stop Covid-19. They too are unsure of how the weeks will unfold, but will continue to support our community every day.

Please take care,

The Potton Federation

