

COPPERMILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Learning Together, Achieving Forever

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Dear Parent/s

It feels like a while ago that I was in touch with you and your children following the temporary closure of our school due to these uncertain and truly exceptional circumstances. Of course it has been just over a week now that your children (and many of you working from home) have been adjusting to a temporary and new way of living, learning and playing. Whilst we all try to adjust and adapt to our new way of life I wanted to reach out and share a message with you, though not my own words, really does resonate with my thinking.

At the end of the letter I also share how we plan to continue to support your children's learning and well-being in the next few days and weeks.

An important message to remember ...

You might be inclined to create a minute by minute schedule for your children. You have high hopes of hours of learning, including online activities, science experiments, and book reports. You'll limit technology until everything is done! But here's the thing...

Our children are just as scared as we are right now. Our children not only can hear everything that is going on around them, but they feel our constant tension and anxiety. They have never experienced anything like this before. Although the idea of being off of school for week's sounds 'awesome', they are probably picturing a fun time like summer break, not the reality of being trapped at home and not seeing their friends.

Over the coming weeks, you may see an increase in behaviour issues with your children. Whether it's anxiety, or anger, or protest that they can't do things normally - it will happen. You may see more meltdowns, tantrums, and oppositional behaviour in the coming weeks. This is normal and expected under these circumstances.

What kids need right now is to feel comforted and loved. To feel like it's all going to be ok. And that might mean that, on some days, you tear up your perfect schedule and love your children a bit more. Bake, and paint pictures. Play board games and watch movies. Do a science experiment together or find virtual field trips of the zoo. Start a book and read together as a family. Snuggle under warm blankets and do nothing.

Don't over-worry now about them regressing in school. Every single child is in this boat and they all will be ok. When we are back in the classroom, we will all 'course correct' and meet them where they are. Teachers are experts at this! Don't pick fights with your children because they don't want to do maths. Don't scream at your children for not following the schedule. Don't mandate 2 hours of learning time if they are resisting it.

If I can leave you with one thing, it's this: at the end of all of this, your children's mental health will be more important than their academic skills. And how they felt during this time will stay with them long after the memory of what they did during those 4 weeks (or more) is long gone. So keep that in mind, every single day.

I have thought long and hard about how our teachers best support you and your children ensuring consistency across the school, a good balance of work and play, mental health and well-being all aligned with our values, ethos and our broad and balanced curriculum. Of utmost importance to me also is ensuring, as best we can, that we stay connected as a whole school community and how we make this happen.

So to start, as we will not be able to conduct parent consultations which were due this week, I have asked that your child's classteacher gives you a call as way of 'touching base' with you and your child. Please do feedback anything else they can do. You should receive a call by the end of the week.

I am hoping that I will continue with the weekly newsletter however I will need you and your children to help me out with this by emailing in any photos of your children and what they have been busy doing and learning! Please send your photographs with your child's name and a few words about the activity they are partaking in to school@coppermill.waltham.sch.uk and we will endeavour to feature them in the 'Coppermill Weekly'.

So for now, learn from home, keep active and stay safe.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Figen Bektaşoğlu

Headteacher

