



## Dilton Marsh Church of England Primary School

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Dear Parents/carers

Thank you for all your support and kind words through this really difficult time. What we all want is to keep your children safe and learning at school. Unfortunately I am still waiting for detailed information.

Whilst you have this time at home we will provide you with work. It won't be possible to provide enough for all day, every day but I do feel that it is vital to provide your children with structure and routine, especially as we do not know how long they will be away from school. Without this, when they do return, it will be difficult for them to fit smoothly back into school life.

We have sent your child home with a pupil log in for eSchools. Through this we are hoping they can contact their class teachers. It will be great to hear from them, whether it is just an update on how they are doing or if they need help with some work. They can upload work on this platform as well.

Throughout this period there will be staff in school during normal school hours (as long as we are fit and well). If you need to change reading books or pick up work which you cannot print at home please pop in during the morning, as long as you are not symptomatic.

We will be opening for children of Key Workers, details to follow. We are still awaiting clarification from the Government regarding the criteria for Key Workers. Once this has been clarified we will send a separate letter to those who have come forward and meet the criteria to outline plans for childcare so that they can attend work.

The Acorn Education Trust are exploring ways in which meals can be provided for those children entitled to Free School Meals. Once we have more information we will be in touch with those parents who are affected by this.

On the next page I have copied a letter I was sent from another Headteacher and I thought it would be lovely to share with you.

Please keep safe and well.

Yours sincerely

Jill Hibbs  
Headteacher

(Author unknown, so can't credit)

Dear parents with school aged children

You might be inclined to create a minute by minute schedule for your kids. 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 kids 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 4 weeks 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 will 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'll see more meltdowns, tantrums, and oppositional behaviour in the coming weeks. This is normal and expected under these circumstances.

What children need right now is to feel comforted and loved. To feel like it's all going to be ok. And that might mean that you tear up your perfect schedule and pile love on your children a bit more. Play outside and go on walks. Bake cookies 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 worry 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 childrens' 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 weeks is long gone. So keep that in mind, every single day.