



Henry Chadwick Community Primary School

School Lane, Hill Ridware, Rugeley WS15 3QN
Tel: 01543 490354



Greywood
Multi-Schools Trust

Headteacher
Mrs V Barnes

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Wednesday 25th March 2020

Dear Parents,

As we are part way through day 3, I want to firstly say well done and thank you for your spirit and commitment at such an unsettling and tricky time. So much positivity is coming back to school, thank you. This is about us working together, guiding and supporting each other as much as we can and as we always try to do at Henry Chadwick. If there is something that you want - ask - and we will try and help. This is a learning curve for us all including how we are sending work home, which has not been without teething problems. Thank you for being patient with us.

We also feel the waves of stress and the messages from parents feeling overwhelmed and under pressure by everything that's happening and more particularly, the work being sent home for your child. I hope that the following message provides some perspective and a realignment of expectations to support you going forward.

1) This is **not** home-schooling. This is an unprecedented emergency situation impacting on the whole world. Home-schooling is a choice, where you considered your options, you planned for it and you are your child's school teacher in whatever form you choose. This is, at best, distance learning. In reality, it's everyone trying to do their best.

2) You are, and always have been, your child's primary educator. If you decide to play outside, bake, or watch TV (educational or otherwise), then that is your choice. That is your right. There is nothing to stress or feel guilty about, just make sure please that you read, read, read and complete some arithmetic and lots of incidental learning, we bet you do lots of art and physical activity too - that's ok. Joe Wickes' free online PE lessons are a great way for the whole family to start the day!

3) To be honest, schools don't know what they're doing either. We 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. If it were, we'd all be out of a job! Teachers teach, but they have never had to do it from a distance before.

Every day counts..... Every minute matters.....



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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, teachers get nothing else done in the day which is why they mark and plan at night. If you're trying to work from home and teach (and probably look after pets too!), stop now. You can certainly have activities where your child learns, but your focus is your job and survival. Again, these are unprecedented times. Stop trying to be superheroes.

5) We do not expect people to buy printers and ink cartridges, print off work etc. These times are going to cause financial strain for most of us so we really want to prevent adding to this burden.

5) Preparing work to send home is tricky for teachers too. Some parents want lots, some want a little. Some have access to the internet whilst others don't. We will send a variety of work, website links and ideas home to support you but please just pick and choose what suits you, your child and your situation.

6) We will put work and ideas on the website too to improve access for everyone.

So, a few FAQs:

My school has sent home lots of physical and online 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, in the hope, that there aren't lots 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. Make a little timetable or craft a plan together as to how you will run your day / half day. Include exercise, reading and arithmetic, the rest is up to you.

My school keeps sending home links and emails with more work. How do I manage this?

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!

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I'm not doing any work with my children. 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. And let them enjoy the sun that we are seeing at the minute! You can even get them using that Lego for spellings.

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

You can't, stop trying. If they're old enough, try to get them to do little bits independently and the older children help the younger children. Otherwise try to do something they can all engage with, reading a story together, some free writing, baking etc.

Our ideal for the children in our school.....

Top priority:

- Reading every day - this can be to them, independent, with siblings, or even via audiobook - there are lots of free links!
- Physical activity - remember those online PE activities.
- Writing, stories, comics, diaries, scrap books or poems. Whatever they enjoy.
- Drawing / painting or arty stuff - cutting, sticking, playdough.
- Try to get maths in what you do during the day. Practical maths, use cooking, telling the time, games, counting, measuring, money etc. Don't forget TT Rockstars! Cook dinner together, do weights and measures, teach them how to make the best roast potatoes!
- Some fine motor work. Lego, cutting, playdough, tidying up small toys.

What's long term and easy to set!

Getting them to independently work on a project is great for keeping brains ticking over. Get them researching in a book or online and putting together something to present to you or family. Could be anything! Pirates, Tudors, the history of something of particular interest - a particular make of car, trains, costume through the ages etc etc etc. A holiday brochure for a place, I'm sure they will come up with something amazing - and probably want to make posters and models!

If younger, lots of imaginative free play, the more independent the better.

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You are doing enough!
You are doing your best!
You are loving your kids and supporting them through a difficult time!

Please, please:

Look after yourselves.

Try to minimise stress, which is absolutely vital in a time like this for mental health.

Don't let the school work add to the stress. Try to have fun!

Kind regards

Vicki Barnes and all the team at HC

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