



**The Federation of
Hackbridge Primary School and Spencer Nursery School**

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Dear Parents and Carers

Words from Mrs Walford...

We appreciate that many people are feeling stressed, overwhelmed and under pressure by everything that is happening. This includes the learning activities being sent home for your child. I wanted to just give my perspective on it all as a Headteacher.

This is not home schooling. These are not normal times. This is an unprecedented emergency situation impacting on the whole world. Home schooling is a choice, where you considered and chose to commit to it; where you plan for it and you are your child's school teacher in whatever form you choose. This situation is not that; at best, it is distance learning. In reality, it is everyone trying to do their best at this time of uncertainty and not knowing what is ahead.

You are, and always have been, your child's primary educator. However, the learning activities that we have sent home and put on our website are not designed to replicate school – if they were, we would all be out of a job! What we do realise is that children will be at home for an unspecified length of time and, whilst the initial days may feel like one of the school holidays, the ongoing staying at home situation may lose its novelty for them as the weeks go on.

The activities that our teachers have put together for the children are designed to be things that they can do 'as and when', building this in to your family schedule as you are able. Some of the things, such as the additional websites and activities that we have collected to share with you, are there as things that you might want to explore if your child is interested in doing so. A number of learning sites have announced that they are giving free access to sites that previously would have required subscriptions: we are just sharing these with you when we hear about them so that you can explore them if you wish to. What you/your child chooses to do from the range of information that we share is down to you/them – there is no right or wrong; no required amount that they must do.

The key in the coming days and weeks is working out what works best for you as a family. Whilst learning is important, so is family time: play games, cook or make lunch together, share a book; read to your child however old they are. We also realise that facilitating distance learning with a primary aged child and working from home at the same time is not possible. Strike a balance between what is achievable for you.

What might help:

- Set a clear routine – this might be a couple of hours for learning activities in the morning and then planning in other activities that your child enjoys in the afternoon. If you can, include snack or

mealtimes in the plan – children are used to knowing this in their school day and it helps some to keep to such a routine. It also stops them asking you when lunchtime will be!

- Think of ways that you can safely keep in touch with your child's friends or wider members of your family – be creative about games that they could play, under your supervision, via Face Time or Skype. Some things work better than others... Connect 4, Guess Who (if you both have a board at home!), Monopoly etc.
- Limit the amount of news that your child watches. If they are watching the news, consider tailored forms such as the BBC's Newsround.
- As their parent, you will need to offer your child perspective about what is going on around them. Do not spend too long talking about coronavirus with your child, however; move on to something else so that they do not spend too long thinking about it.

We are all still thinking about each and every one of you and you can contact us if you need to – office@hackbridgeprimary.sutton.sch.uk . We remain open to a small number of pupils whose parents/carers are working in roles critical to the Covid-19 response – we are especially proud of those members of our community working on the front line in the NHS for their hours of commitment for us all at this challenging time.

With best wishes to you all, yours faithfully



Emma Walford
Headteacher

