**My reflection of this week (26.03.2020)**

In 11 years of teaching, this has got to be one of the most unusual weeks of my teaching career! This new ‘normal’ that I am trying to carve out both as a teacher and as a parent has definitely posed its challenges. This is what I have learned so far;

**Being flexible is a must!** We are trying to look after our children, look after our homes, in some cases work from home or trickier still, continue going to work and we are doing all this without knowing where this situation is going to lead next. I have realised this week that choosing the moment is important. Choosing the moment for learning, choosing the moment for working, choosing the moment for cleaning. In our house, we have achieved more on some days than others and I have had to come to terms with this being OK.

**As teachers, we have not worked in this way before.** We have had little notice and time to prepare for ‘teaching’ in this way. It has been helpful receiving feedback and I am hoping that each day there is something for everyone. Everything I send might not work for everyone, every day. This is OK.

Some children will be ploughing through the workbooks that we sent out and others won’t. They were sent to provide resources so that your child can consolidate skills taught and continue to learn, not to be a source of stress and anxiety. Some days your child may complete lots of pages, some days they may not complete any.

**As parents, we already know lots of ways to enhance our children’s learning, we have been doing it since the day they were born.** Your children will not always engage with the suggestions I make. This is OK! I have seen lots of ideas adapted and lots have you have told me about things that your children have been motivated to do. Going outside and enjoying the sunshine has been a definite theme for this week and as much value can be gained from being outdoors as a family as being indoors doing ‘lessons’. The best learning in my house this week has happened through play and conversation about the themes set by the teacher and we have been selective about when we have done things and how long we have spent each day.

**It is tricky to recreate the school day.** At school, each lesson is split into teaching/collaborative learning time and independent learning time. The independent learning makes up about 25 minutes in each lesson. If you are managing to fit in 3 or 4 sessions of 20 minutes focussed on an educational activity you are doing well. In our house, we have managed 15 minutes reading, 15 minutes phonics and 15 minutes Maths.

**The ideal things to focus on;**

* Some reading every day (independent, to them or via audiobooks etc.)
* Some writing – lists/letters/keep a diary/sentences/stories/plays/a comic strip
* Practical Maths – Telling the time, measuring, times tables, maths games – physical or digital
* Some fine skill motor work – Lego, cutting, play dough, tidying up small toys
* Physical exercise everyday – Joe Wicks, going for a walk, or playing outside
* Some art/music where possible through the week. Doesn’t need to be guided
* As a challenge – working independently on a project of their choosing is great for keeping the brain ticking over

**You are doing enough.** You are loving your kids and supporting them through a difficult time. Look after yourself. Minimising stress is absolutely vital in a time like this for mental health. Don’t let THIS be something that stresses you!

I will continue to send my emails until Wednesday next week. Then enjoy the holidays.

Mrs King