



Newsletter

*'A school to be proud of, a school that inspires,
a school that encourages'*

Friday 20th March

Dear Parents,

We can safely say we will always remember this day. It is momentous and we know that children, staff and parents will all be feeling a sense of anxiety about the uncertainty ahead of us. As the school gates close today, we need to find a new 'normal' – new ways of working together for your children and new ways of keeping our Colyton Primary family as one. Whilst this will no doubt bring huge challenges, we feel sure that we will come through it as an even stronger school community.

We have to say a huge thank you to the amazing staff here. They have amazed us with their support, positivity and flexibility in the most challenging of times. Every one of them, from the admin team to the teachers, from TAs to cleaning, have gone above and beyond to keep the children as safe and happy as can be.

Many of you are about to embark on a time where your children are learning with you at home. We understand that you will have questions and concerns about this. Let us reassure you that we are still your child's school, regardless of whether they are learning in our building. We still care very much about their welfare and their progress. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if we can support and make sure you have seen the information about the systems we have put in place:

<https://colytonprimary.org.uk/children-home-learning/>

This quote has been 'doing the rounds' on Facebook, but it is good and useful advice I think:

Most importantly, give your children time to process what's happening. Be patient, take time, give them breaks. In school they don't 'work' non-stop. They have discussions, their teachers demonstrate and model, they chat whilst they work, they play games at break, they have a mad half hour at lunchtime, they listen to stories.

Children are just as confused by what is going on as we are. They have holidays that they aren't going on, they have parents who are looking worried because of the uncertainties being faced, they hear EVERYTHING and internalise it into something bigger than we can possibly imagine.

Snuggle up, watch a film, build dens, play in the garden, enjoy an hour together forgetting the world... you'll need the break from your work too.

People's physical health is no doubt being crushed by all of this, but the mental health effects could be equally as damaging if we don't allow time for fun, love, imaginative adventures and caring for those around us.

It is so important to talk to the children about what is happening in ways that they understand and without causing panic. There is some really good advice on this here: <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html>. Your child may find it tricky to not be at school, and may find social distancing hard, and this website might be useful if so: <https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/>.

We will continue to send out weekly newsletters and stay in close contact with you in as many ways as we can find.

Please keep yourselves and your precious children safe,

With best wishes,

Claire Fegan and Sarah Prince