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## 'Striving for Excellence'

Dear Bell Lane Parents,

I just wanted to reach out to you and say how much I am missing you and your children.

You might be inclined to create a minute by minute schedule for your children. 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 children 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 weeks sounds awesome, they are probably picturing a fun time like summer break, not the reality of being at trapped at home and not seeing their school friends.

Over the coming weeks, you may see an increase in behaviour issues with your children. Whether it is anxiety, or anger, or protest that they can't do things normally - it might happen. You may also see more meltdowns, tantrums, and oppositional behaviour in the coming weeks. This is normal and expected under these circumstances.

What our children need right now is to feel comforted and loved. To feel like it's all going to be alright. And that might mean for that day you tear up your perfect schedule and love your children a bit more every day. Play outside and go for a walk. 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 or arguments with your children because they don't want to do maths. Don't scream at them 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 children's 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.

Each week I will be sending Headteacher challenges and one of them involves you.



I will be setting a family **Hometalk challenge** each week too: Thoughtful conversations with your family while you are eating or relaxing.

Mealtime question: **Do you have to be scared in order to be brave?**

**Post your feedback on class dojo by writing comments next to this task.**

Ask your child how to do a brain break every morning, after lunch and then at the end of the school day, Every evening you could all share with your family what are we grateful for today.... So keep that in mind, every single day.

If you need to contact us in the event of an emergency we have the following means: [children@belllane.barnet.sch.uk](mailto:children@belllane.barnet.sch.uk) and this number to call only from 9:00-3:30pm 07938 266037.

Well wishes,

Miss Harsha Patel Head Teacher

