**Birches Primary School**

Dear Parents,

Our teachers are working very hard to provide a range of activities to help you keep the children entertained, focused and engaged at home. They are also putting activities on Seesaw which are there for the children to complete if you wish. Lots of people are feeling stressed, overwhelmed and under pressure by everything that’s happening in the world at the moment. This includes for some parents, the work being sent home for your child. I wanted to just give my perspective on it all and I hope this can help allay your worries.

**A few points to note:**

1) This is not home-schooling. Please don’t feel that you have to become full time personal tutors to your children. This is an unprecedented emergency situation impacting on the whole world. Some of our children love learning but some will be more reluctant to do some of the activities provided. Don’t force it – provide it when your child is in the mood!

2) You are, and always have been, your child’s primary educator. You know your child best. If you decide that your child isn’t going to engage with the activity sent home and is going to spend the entire morning playing or watching TV, then that is your choice. That is your right. There is nothing to stress or feel guilty about.

3) This is an unprecedented situation and schools are working it out day by day. We had little notice and very little preparation time and we hope you understand that we are doing our best for your child.

4) My hope is that children will continue to enjoy learning in whatever form that may be and stay well, including their emotional wellbeing!

5) Your child will not fall behind. Most of the work provided is revision and reminder work. They will cover all of this again, multiple times so please don’t become anxious about it!

**For the children in our school I would love for them to have the opportunity to…**

– Read every day (independently or books read to them by an adult/older sibling).

– Do some free writing now and then e.g. a diary, story, project work.

– Do some practical hands on maths e.g. via cooking, outside play or maths games (physical

 or digital).

– Extend fine motor skills e.g. Lego, cutting, playdough, small toys.

– Have some form of physical exercise every day.

– Enjoy lots of imaginative free play.

Please note these ideas are not being recommended to do each one daily – you will drive yourself mad trying to fit it all in! However, with new guidelines to “stay home” children will become bored so I thought it just might help in the days ahead.

You are doing a great job. You are loving your children and supporting them through a difficult time. Also please look after yourself as minimising stress is absolutely vital in a time like this for mental health.

This new situation we are in is very challenging, for myself, it is as a Principal, mum, and daughter etc, and I hate the fact that I can’t see the children, my staff and yourselves every day. I have been at Birches Primary school for 20 years now and have enjoyed every day welcoming all the children, parents, grandparents each morning. So, I’m sure you realise it makes me sad even though it is necessary for the greater good.

Stay safe and look after your families, we can get through by working together.

Please remember, although we are closing at Easter you can still get in touch if you need to via the email address pwatson676@c2kni.net.

Any of our Key Workers who are unable to arrange supervision for your children, please send me an email and I will get back in touch with you.

Take care of yourselves and families and stay safe,

Mrs Watson