Dear parent / guardian,

 What strange times these are! If I had told you at our last ‘Happy Healthy Me’ workshop at the end of January that just six short weeks later, we would be contemplating closing the school, and would maybe not be likely to return until September, you would either have laughed at me, or had someone in a white coat come and take me away! And yet here we are, in exactly that situation! So my purpose in writing to you now is for us to continue to work together, and to help you make the best of this bad situation!

 I realise that the prospect of ‘teaching’ your children at home may be a somewhat daunting and slightly overwhelming one for many of you at this point, but I just want to encourage you.. remember how I told you at the start of the year at our very first parent workshop that your children have got to where they are because of you – you have been their first educators, and for the first three years of their little lives, you taught them all that they know, so be proud of yourselves! Well, now that time is just being extended a little longer! So view it as an opportunity, to be able to spend some more quality time with your children, and to continue being instrumental in their learning.

Over the next number of weeks, I will be writing to you on our Nursery page to give you some ideas of what you can be doing with your children at home to try and best mirror the things that they would have been doing if Nursery was still open.

For this first instalment, I have included a copy of our daily timetable, so if suits you, you can still follow that, just to try and keep the children in a bit of normal routine.

I have also attached a copy of ’20 Activities in 20 Days’ that covers the 4 main areas of the ‘Getting Ready to Learn’ program that you and the children have been participating in all year. I realise that there are a lot of ideas here, and that it might seem a bit overwhelming, but please just dip in and out of them as best suits your family situation at this time. I will also be posting up our newsletters which you would have received at the start of each month telling you the topics and learning that we would have been covering for that particular month.

To try and give you an idea of a sample ‘lesson’, this week, we would have been finishing off our topic on Movement by looking at things that move in and on the water. So we would have been looking at different types of sea creatures, as well as discussing different types of boats, and the idea of floating and sinking. So for home, you could maybe look up pictures online with your children of some different sea creatures and then talk about them; and for boats, you could gather up some different sorts of containers (like empty margarine tubs) to make a boat, let the children decorate them, then maybe at bathtime, let them put them in the water to see if they float; they could even try putting different things in them (like Lego bricks, or little toys) to see how much their boat can hold before it will sink! And then discuss why.

As I say, those are just some ideas. The best advice that I can give you is not to panic! Just focus on the simple things! For example, let them join in doing everyday tasks with you – they could make their own sandwich for lunch, or set the table at dinnertime, or sort the washing with you. And let them be as independent as possible in all that they do, like dressing themselves, or tidying up – make it a game!

Really, just spend time with them, and do lots of the following things –

* talk to them

it will help build up their vocabulary and talking skills

* play with them

use the toys they already have, or play a board game,

and let them explore and observe things like looking at shapes around your home, letters on packaging, changes in the seasons

* read to them and sing rhymes

read a book and sing nursery rhymes every night at bedtime

* be as active as possible

either by joining in with Joe Wicks on his YouTube channel every morning at 9am, or get them out into the garden every day

If you do even just these five things – talk, play, read, sing and be active – then you will be doing the best thing for your children, and will be giving them the best foundation they could have for their next stage!

Finally, and most importantly, it is with great personal sadness that I find myself having to say goodbye to the children, who I have enjoyed teaching so much, and will miss so dearly! But the most important thing is that they and you all stay safe and healthy, and that we will see each other again at the end of all this! In a new Braidside!☺

Please take good care of yourselves! With kind regards and best wishes!

Karen Turner

PS If you are struggling and/or need any advice, please contact me anytime on the following email address:- kturner452@c2kni.net

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| **Our Nursery Day** |
| **9.00am** | **Indoor play** |
|  **9.45am** | **Tidy up time** |
| **10.00am** | **Snack time** |
| **10.15am** | **Outdoor play** |
| **11.00am** | **Songs and rhymes** |
| **11.15am** | **Story time** |
| **11.30am** | **School’s out!** |