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Dear Parents/Carers

Ms Grinnell and I saw the words that the head of Walter Halls, Ms Beardah had written to their parents and carers and we both agreed that we couldn't improve on this letter while really agreeing with the thinking behind it. We hope it helps in these difficult times.

“A message about children's wellbeing at this confusing time:

You might be inclined to create a minute by minute schedule for your children. You might have high hopes of hours of learning, including online activities, sciences experiments, and book reports. You'll limit technology until everything is done! But here's the thing...

Our children are just as concerned and worried as we may be right now. Our children not only can hear everything that is going on around them, but feel our constant tension and anxiety. They have never experienced anything like this before. Although the idea of being off school for a few weeks sounds awesome, they are probably picturing a fun time like summer break, not the reality of being trapped at home and not seeing their friends.

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

What kids need right now is to feel comforted and loved. To feel like it's all going to be ok. And that might mean that you tear up your perfect schedule and push your love on to your kids a bit more. Play outside and go on walks? Bake cookies and paint pictures? Play board games and watch movies? Do a science experiment together or find virtual field trips of the zoo on-line? Start a book and read together as a family? Snuggle under warm blankets and do nothing for a while?

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 work hard to get this back on track and meet them where they are. Teachers are experts at this! Don't get upset with your children because they don't want to do work all day or follow a schedule every day and all week.

If I can leave you with one thing, it's this: at the end of all of this, your kids' 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 their weeks away from school is long gone. So, keep that in mind every single day.

Stay safe and take care of each other.”

Mr Magner The Milford Academy Headteacher



M – Motivated **I** – Independent **L** – Learning **F** – Forward Thinking **O** – Outstanding **R** – Respect **D** – Determined