

## Goosehill Primary School Weekly Notes- March 13, 2020

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Dear Parents,

Thank you for your patience and support during these most unsettling times. I want you to know that we have been very careful to keep your children comfortable and happy in school. The teachers have been wonderful-- helping their students enjoy being with their friends and continuing to learn in the midst of the events unfolding around us.

I want you to know that most, if not all, of our young students are aware of what is in the news and have some real concern about what they are hearing. In addition to the classroom discussions the teachers have had to reassure their students, I spoke with many of the children today to reassure them that things are going to be okay. Many expressed that they are worried about the virus-- getting sick themselves or being afraid of what might happen to the people they love. I told them they needn't be afraid-- that kids' immune systems (their "defender cells") are very strong and fight off viruses. When they responded that "old people" will get sick, I assured them that adults are working hard to keep everyone safe and doctors will help people who need it.

Some children wanted to know why events are being cancelled and schools are closing. I explained that it is just a way to help keep people *not so close together* for a while so the germs can't spread so easily. I explained that I didn't know if our school would close, but if it did, it wouldn't mean something bad is happening. I didn't want them to think there was imminent danger to them if they were told suddenly they couldn't go to school. Now that we know that school will be closed next week, please let your child know that his/her teachers and friends are okay. The only thing they have to think about is all the learning they can do at home. Their job will be to read lots of books, build towers, draw pictures, play games, use their imagination, and play outside. I also said that if we stay home more than a couple of days, their teachers would send them some fun work to do. Now we know that this will occur on Wednesday. Please encourage your child to simply play and enjoy the next few days. You can begin a routine involving some formal school work on Wednesday. In the meantime, please read wonderful stories to your child, facilitate imaginative play, cook or bake together, play board games, and encourage outdoor activities like walks, bike rides, and backyard play.

It is not easy to explain something to children that we can hardly explain ourselves. The important thing to remember is that children do not have the perspective of adults. Their imaginations can heighten their fears and it is our responsibility to shelter them from as much as possible. We can be honest, but we have to be careful not to burden or frighten them. They deserve reassurance that they are going to be okay. Leave the worrying to the adults.

Please do your best to keep your children away from the news. Try to keep your phone out of their view and avoid reacting to news and notifications in front of them. Children are looking and listening to how we are responding to this stressful situation. If the adults in their lives seem overly worried, children's anxiety levels may rise.

During stressful times, the best thing parents can do is be available to their children—to listen, read a book, play a game, watch a movie together. Try to keep family routines going-- children thrive on structure. Continue family dinners, shared reading time, do chores together, keep bath

and bedtime regular. Most importantly, give them a little extra attention and a little extra cuddling during these most challenging times.

Please look for the email from your child's teacher on Wednesday. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Wishing you a peaceful weekend and continued good health.

Warmly,

Lynn Herschlein

[District Flyers 3-13-20.pdf](#)