



ACS International Schools Parent Support Meetings

6 May 2020: Early Childhood with ACS Trustee Pam Mundy

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*We carry our
childhood with us.*

”

Gary E. Schmidt

Distance Learning in Early Childhood

Distance learning is a specific challenge for families with young children. Thankfully, early childhood teachers and school friends provide important connections and a connection to familiar people and safe places in unsettled times

For a while, parents and caregivers have an even greater share of responsibility in the always-dynamic partnership between home and school, guided by ACS Early Childhood teacher expertise

Learning will not diminish, rather it will be enhanced by a rich and focused interaction between school and home

This is a time of deep learning, of precious family time and authentic collaboration.



Learning to be human

Whilst learning is based at home, it can focus more acutely on learning how to be human— something that cannot be taught formally!

Being human is a key element of early learning in schools and requires parents, as our partners and in their role as children's 'first and most enduring educators' to be the main protagonists In distance learning environments,

Those who care for and educate young children at home have an unprecedented opportunity to exercise (even more than usual) the gift of nurture, and to reflect on their intuitive emotional response to themselves and their children in times of crisis.

It's okay not to be okay.



What 'distance' really means

For teachers:

The acute awareness that it is impossible to replicate the intricate world of the classroom, the vital social interactions taking place as children learn to be part of a wider world, the careful honing of individual programmes for each child, so that their learning matches their personal trajectory

For parents:

The anxiety of receiving on line learning guidance, multiple resources (which although of the highest online quality, can never match the detailed and responsive learning offer that takes place in the school) managing their children's responses, trying to give feedback and missing the ongoing dialogue with teachers, not to mention managing 'working from home'.



All learning is based in play ...



- **Resources** - items found around the home or commercially produced can be used in an open-ended way
- **Space**: indoors or outdoors, small and cosy - a nook, under a table covered with a blanket can become a place of imaginings
- **Time**: extended and uninterrupted time to play allows children to become deeply involved. No need for a 'school length' day or adding pressure to ourselves or children
- **Being okay with some mess**: early learning is messy and unpredictable in all respects
- **Joining in**: respect children's rules and decisions; supporting and enhancing the play rather than leading it.

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Our task is to help children
climb their own mountains,
as high as possible. No one
can do more.

”

Loris Malaguzzi

Return ... to the future?

We are all professionals in our own fields and will support and respect each other at this difficult time. Soon, we will begin our 'normal' lives again, knowing that our children are safe, that the continuity of learning has been maintained and that although things may be significantly different for all of us for a while, ACS will offer the same high-quality experience as before.

Our ACS Early Childhood teachers will collect the myriad threads of the children's learning during their time at home, of their thinking, of their new wisdom learned from the precious and extended time of being with you.

They will apply their expertise as educators in continuing to weave the rich tapestry of early childhood, interspersed with the threads of gold that you, as parents and our partners in the precious journey of childhood, have had this unique extended time to create for them.



THANK YOU



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