



1 April, 2020

From my heart to yours

To My Dearest Rydalmer PS Families,

Please take some time to read this. There's so much I want to say. I know your time is precious so I'll try to keep it as brief as I can. Once the adults have read this, I'd love for you to share this with your children so that they can hear the messages for them.

1. I miss you all so very much. I particularly miss our students who bring me so much joy every day, but parents and carers, I miss you too. Rydalmer PS is just not the same. It's still nice and colourful and there's memories of you all, all around me, but nothing can replace your gorgeous faces, smiles, chatter, laughter, singing, jokes = YOU. Nothing can replace YOU which is why we must all follow the isolation recommendations so we all stay safe. When this is over, I want to see all of YOU back here at Rydalmer PS with your RPS Family.
2. I know it's tough. It's tough for Mums, Dads, Grandparents and kids. It's tough for whole families. We have parents out of jobs, parents working from home, kids now learning at home, parents/grandparents facilitating learning at home – huge adjustments. It's also tough for our teachers and staff. We're all feeling it. This is not normal and this is not how any of us would normally prepare for change. None of us had any time - it just seemed to happen and we were all expected to cope. I don't want this to be hard, I don't want this to be tough. My wish for you all (as one of my favourite books says) is that "I wish you more". It is a beautiful book – if you haven't read it I suggest you do or check out this link and have it read to you (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_U31UZQIE0). This book is filled with wishes, and I would like to send some of these to you, our Rydalmer PS families.

Wishes from the book	Bek Zadow's wishes for our Rydalmer PS Family
<p>I wish you more ups than downs</p> 	<p>This might sound easier said than done at the moment, but we can achieve this. If there is one thing we will have more of during this pandemic, it is time in isolation with our families. We all lead such busy lives and often feel like we don't have time. In a way, this is forcing us to slow and have time with the family we live with. This can only be a positive, an 'up'. Time to reconnect, time to grow together, time to learn together (and I am not talking about school education here, I'm talking about personal learning about one another), just time to 'be'. I believe this time we have is precious and there will be so many positives to gain.</p>

I wish you more give than take



You all hear me go on about kindness all the time. I truly believe that this is the simplest thing that you can give someone, and it costs nothing – it's just giving a bit of yourself.

Mums, Dads and Carers (Adults), you give so much to your children already, and now you're giving them even more. I want all of our parents and carers to remember that it is important to be kind to yourselves too. You can only do so much. And if you're doing your best, then no one can ask for anything more. I need you all to make sure that you are ok, because your kids need you.

Kids, you need to remember kindness more than ever right now – it will help get you through, but it will also help your parents. They are doing a tremendous job guiding you with all of these living changes, and your education. They are doing their very best and I am sure you all appreciate everything they are doing. Don't forget to give them lots of your kindness by not only using your manners, but by offering to help them with jobs at home, by doing what they ask you when they ask, by listening to them when they are trying to help you with your Home Learning and other home activities. I know you'll take the beautiful kindness your parents are giving you, but you must also give this kindness back to them.

I wish you more we than me



We, a group of two or more can look different every way we turn. 'We' can be a family group, a friend group, a school group, a community group. My favourite thing about this wish is the 'we're all in this together' sentiment. There is so much we can achieve as a 'We', rather than just focussing on the 'poor me'. There are so many ways to be a great 'we':

- **Kids** - Be an active member of your household. Your family is a team – the adults can't do it all.
- **Kids and Adults** - Stay connected to your friends and family by giving them a phone call, a FaceTime or an email
- **Kids** - Be an active member of your class if you can. We are trying to facilitate some social interaction through Adobe Connect, so if you can join in on this, please do so. If you have internet, contribute to the Google Classroom as a supportive classmate.
- **Adults** – I know there is a lot of goodwill in our community. I have seen this first hand and I have seen demonstrations of this online from our families. Please keep up this great work. Your random acts of kindness and just 'being there' for one another (at a distance) make the isolation feel much less.

I wish you more hugs than ughs



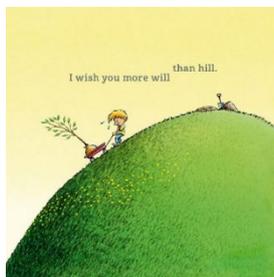
Now.....this is a tricky one given 'social-distancing'. Human touch is so important. I'm not going to tell parents and kids they can't hug in their own home. A hug in this sense is a special moment you share with another – and I wish you lots of these. For those practising 'no-touch' or limited touch, perhaps you might consider a wink, a smile, blow a kiss from far away or even a dab. You will have some 'ugh' moments, but as long as there are more 'hugs', I know you'll be just fine. **Kids and Adults** – please make sure you share lots of special moments to lift each others' spirits.

I wish you more WOO-HOO than WHOA



Kids and Adults – WHOA!! We're on a crazy ride here with this pandemic!! But it shouldn't all be doom and gloom. Fun is so important to our mental health and wellbeing. There are lots of ways to have fun with your families. Play a board game or a card game, play with a ball in the backyard, have a family party at home with balloons, games and dancing (I know one of our families did this already as they told me on an Adobe Connect), do something crafty, bake and cook together or make up silly jokes. The list is endless and I'm sure you all have even better ideas than me. Have fun, and when you do.....say WOO-HOO!!

I wish you more will than hill



We've done a lot of work on this at RPS. This is all about growth mindset and having persistence. It is understanding that it is ok for things to be hard and challenging. It is ok if we don't 'get it right' the first, second or even third go. What is most important is the 'will' you have to keep going, even when things feel really tough.

Adults – one way we try to change the kids thinking is by using one simple word.....YET. It's so easy for kids (and adults) to say, "I can't do it". We turn these statements into a growth statement by rephrasing it for the kids by saying, "You can't do it YET!!" We then look at steps they can take to achieve what they can't do yet. This is a process I find really useful for my thinking too (and believe me I've used it a lot over the past few weeks) so you might like to give this a go.

Kids – when it gets tough, think about all of the lessons you've had on persistence and resilience. Even if you think the hill is really big, I know you can get to the top if you put all your 'will' in to it.

Kids and Adults – remember, we'll all get to the top of the hill at different times and that's ok – it is not a race. The most important thing is that we didn't give up.

<p>I wish you more pause than fast-forward</p> 	<p>This is so relevant right now. While it is tempting to wish that we could 'fast-forward' the next six months, I think the pauses we experience will be so beneficial to our growth. Without pausing, we miss so much. I'm predicting that after this, many of us may choose to have more moments of pause in this hustle and bustle life we lead.</p> <p>Adults and Kids - Pause allows for wonderment. I encourage you to go outside to your front or backyard and stop. Stand still and take a breath of fresh air. Look towards the horizon and notice the beauty around you. See if you actually notice something you haven't before. Beauty is all around us, but we're so busy with life we don't often stop to enjoy what is surrounding us. Do this at different times of the day – the changes are amazing.</p> <p>Adults - Pause the Home Learning when you need to. If it is all too much, just stop and take a break. Give yourself a break and give the kids a break. Let the kids have some free-time to reset, and pause to watch them. This is precious time that you don't often get to see, so enjoy it. If the Home Learning is too much, do your own version. Pause to play a game, read a book or have a chat with the kids. Interactions like this are important to their development. If you can give them this, their learning will still be ok.</p>
<p>I wish all of this for you because you are everything I could wish for.....and more.</p> 	<p>I wish this for all of you, adults and kids alike, because I care. I care for our RPS kids, families, staff and community.</p> <p>Adults – As a Mum, I also get how hard this is. I'm not doing a great job of it myself, but I am doing my best while working fulltime and being a single-Mum to my two children. I want you to know that whatever you can do is enough, and please don't worry about what you can't do. As I said in point #1 (which was three pages back, so you may have forgotten by now!!), the most important thing in all of this is YOU all, which is why I need YOU and YOUR kids to be ok.</p>

3. We have an incredible staff of teachers, SLSOs and Administration who are all working so hard to support our students and our families. The additional hours our teachers have worked to create the digital learning packs, plus the additional time they are spending online beyond the 'normal' hours to support our students is huge. I am so proud of the team here. We will continue the great work that is already happening, and our aim is to get better each week as we refine best practice in virtual classrooms and digital learning.

Thanks,
Bek Zadow
Principal

