

EMERGENCY HOME SCHOOL PLAN

(or How to Home Ed two very inquisitive and intelligent 11 & 13 year olds whilst having fun, doing my stuff, not turning into a monster or going bat shit crazy!)

Theme Tune – [Panic](#) by The Smiths

*”To challenge the politics of isolation we need tactics for togetherness”
Ian Nesbitt, Artist*

Introduction

Due to the Covid-19 virus, schools were shut from 23rd March 2020, with no date set to reopen – this was a massive change, and one that we needed to adapt to rapidly. My goal was to use this challenge to allow the kids to follow their interests, but also to ensure that I had space to work on things for myself too.

This is a one page of A4, speedy design, created with a large glass of wine in one hand and a pencil in the other. A printable version of this design is [available](#).

This design has been shared with others to help them to think about how this situation could work for them.

Ethics

People Care – Ensure we all look after our physical and mental states during this time; Leave plenty of space for self expression and personal projects; Check in with each other regularly; Check in with friends, family and neighbours

Fair Share – Share household chores and help each other out with problems; Share supplies with neighbours if needed.

Earth Care – I suppose by staying home, we are travelling less. It is an opportunity for the kids to be outside much more.

Design Process – CEAP

Collect Information, Evaluate, Apply Permaculture Principles, Plan

Collect

- Schools closed due to Covid-19 Virus 23/3/2020 – Who knows when?

- Maintain connections...”To challenge the politics of isolation we need tactics for togetherness” – Ian Nesbitt, Artist
- Both schools providing resources and work for children to complete
- Andy working from home, My work is cancelled, but lots of outdoor work to do plus Diploma stuff
- Need to balance fun with learning
- Plan non-school ‘learning’ around interests
- Energy Levels
- Andy needs Broadband for work at key times
- Food to play a key role – nutrition
- Spend time exploring outside spaces
- Resources
 - TV, Internet, Books, Kindle
 - Countryside
 - Car
 - Phones
 - School stuff
- Skills –
 - Cooking
 - IT
 - Woodwork
 - Sewing/knitting
 - Gardening/Ecology

Below is a list that each child put together of things they are interested in I gave them 4 criteria to work to as a jumping off point.

	E	C
Things I want to Learn about / Learn To Do	Photography Watercolours painting Play Chess	How to Valet a Car Design a Room Spring Clean
Things I am interested in	Cooking strange food Sewing Hyper-realistic art Paper craft Drawing people	Interior Design Doctor Who Crafts
Name a musician/style of music you want to	Candi Staton	Aretha Frankin

	E	C
explore	Fontains DC Wham Queen	Soul
Name an artist/style of art you want to explore	Van Gough Studio Ghibli Banksy	Watercolour Alexander Girard
Food I want to eat	Beetroot Hummus & Veg sticks Sushi Curry Hoisin duck wraps Salad	Spicy Popcorn Celery & cream cheese Falafel Pie Chicken burgers Carbonara
Places I want to visit	Hardcastle Craggs Marsden Moor Wentworth Castle Fairy Glen Frickley Country Park Stoodley Pike Pendle Hill	Geocaching Dinosaur forest The Frying Pan

Evaluate

Tools Used – Brainstorming, family discussion

- **Priorities**

- Staying sane/healthy
- Completing school work
- Setting a routine

- **Energy Levels**

- All have higher energy in the morning
- E needs to be made to get up or will sleep until lunchtime – teenager

- **Technology**

- Broadband – High use (e.g. watching TV/Videos) allowed in morning or after 5pm.
- Zoom calls need to set guidelines for safeguarding purposes

Apply Principles

I used David Holmgren's principles to guide my design.

- **Observe & Interact/Creatively use and respond to change**

- This is new territory for all of us – check in regularly and change plans as needed
- Work with the weather
- **Obtain a yield**
 - Send work back to school
 - Are we happy – check in/observe
 - Have we learned new skills
 - Maintain relationship with outside world
- **Apply Self regulation and accept feedback**
 - Regular check ins
- **Integrate rather than segregate**
 - Involve everyone in our projects, show an interest, ask questions
 - Use Zoom to maintain connections to outside world – set up group chats/meetings
- **Use and value diversity**
 - Learn how we each learn
 - Share skills from each other/internet/friends
- **Pattern to detail/Catch & Store Energy**
 - Work around energy levels. This will form basis of timetable
 - Make sure everyone has space to be alone as well as together.
 - Set menu plans on a rotation – make sure leftovers are used
 - Do set school work in the morning. Work alone, unless help is needed. Gives Mum a chance to do her work too!
 - Afternoon involves dog walk, free learning.
 - Evening we could watch online plays/movies/do virtual tours
 - Everybody has their jobs that help in the smooth running of the household. Share the jobs

Plan

- Check in daily with each other – evaluate what is going well, what needs to change
- Check in with neighbours and family – check if anyone needs any help
- Set house rules and review them, we should all do our share of chores!

- Work around the weather!
- Review at end of first week how this is working – tweak
- Review every 4 weeks – tweak

Evaluation

Update: 22nd April 2020

The start of 'Homeschool' started well, with much enthusiasm. However, the eldest child found the amount of work and lack of timetable overwhelming. Luckily the school has been learning as it goes and asking for feedback. They have now set a manageable timetable, which started this week.

We had 2 weeks of Easter Holidays – where I gardened, the kids played out, we went for walks and had NO PLANS. It was lovely, but also frustrating in that many things were started, and many, many things were left unfinished and abandoned, and not cleared away.

So, we have slightly altered our routine. Each morning we all set a list of manageable tasks for the day, which will include some form of exercise – we have been walking and cycling and have recently signed up to a local fitness instructors classes (which supports our local economy in a small way).

For example, the tasks for today for my youngest are:

- Complete school work set for today
- Tidy bedroom
- Empty Dishwasher
- Cycle to town to the Cheese Shop (her favourite shop)
- Do some more work on her magnetic brush she is helping build with her Dad to sweep up & collect metal bits in his workshop
- Destroy the old bar with a big hammer

Update: 22 June 2020

We made it this far, and have only just had our first proper melt down!

My eldest is seriously missing her friends. My kids don't really use their phones (their choice, not parental guidance – they probably see my self and their Dad spending far too much time looking at screens), so social interaction outside the family has been minimal.

However, restrictions are easing and so with another parent we have agreed that she will do a couple of lessons a week with her friend; together. They can chat, bounce ideas around and TALK!

My youngest has been taking one of her friends off into the hills for (appropriately distanced) walks, playing, chatting and exploring – without adult intervention. This freedom is much needed.

I have realised that in order to get work done on the diploma, I need to get up early and work before anyone else rises, so here I am at 6.30am, sitting at my PC in my PJs – with a VERY strong coffee.

Both kids have discovered the joy of cooking and exploring food. For the past few weeks we have set a theme and each child has been cooking meals or baking. We've visited Japan, Holland, France and Italy, tying in with virtual trips to museums or landmarks. We have had a Ready, Steady, Cook week – where the kids chose random ingredients we had in, and tasked me with making a 2 course meal – the Cornflake Moussaka was a triumph!

My Husbands work has been pretty busy, and he has also been building a fancy new chicken shed and decking out part of the barn to form a social/teaching space. It has felt very much like Groundhog day, and I think the mundanity of everyday life has hit me hard, but I have been helping out at a friends farm, a community orchard and helping a friend decorate her new shop for a few hours, which has helped me stay sane. He is however taking a day off work soon, so we can have a family day out as an end of term treat – the kids looked in the calendar and realised they were missing out on all the end of term fun... so I am doing my best to have some FUN!

Update – 3rd September 2020

The youngest went back to school today. She was beyond excited. New school, new adventures and ready to be learning things I cannot teach her.

As a family I think this time has made us appreciate each other a little bit more, but also appreciate the input of others.

Reflection of the Design Process

As an emergency and quick design, I feel that the CEAP process fitted in really well. It is a design process I would definitely use again in a situation where a fast plan of action is needed.

Using Holmgren's principles as a sort of tool to guide the design was useful as it made me think more holistically about the design.

If I was to re-do this design I would probably have used mind-mapping to capture our discussions.

If I was to have spent more time on this design I would have looked further into Goals, Processes and Functions. Considering what the outcomes and yields for each person were, and investigating how the design can achieve these goals. What functions and elements would be needed? How could the elements be related?