

PLAY PEOPLE

JOY PLAY CHILDHOOD MAGIC NATURE



ISSUE 3



Welcome to Play People, an occasional mini-magazine introducing inspirational people for you to meet in your adventure into play.

Each issue will feature a thinker, educator or parent who has given time to piece together their pedagogy and ideas for play and childhood. I hope we'll cover plenty of ground in the coming issues.

If what you read inspires you or presents questions then please get in touch, especially if you'd like to contribute to an issue!!

There are many great educators out there and you are one of them, when you turn the page you will meet another one.

Childhood needs all the advocates it can get its hands on.

It's time for play, it's time for Play People...



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Meet Emma!

Emma is passionate about play and child-led learning and, like most of us, has seen at first hand the power of bringing playfulness into home learning over the last five months.

Here she reflects on some of the lessons she's learned during that time and how it has deepened her resolve to see play thrive within schools and settings.

Children need connection with one another like never before and they definitely need connection with Play People too!

Greg

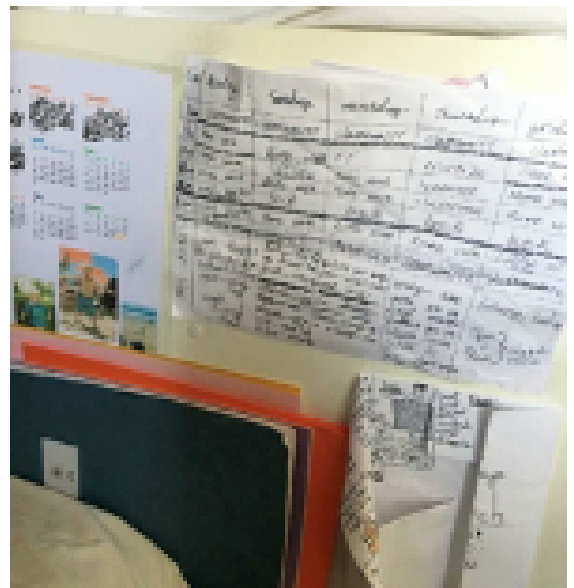
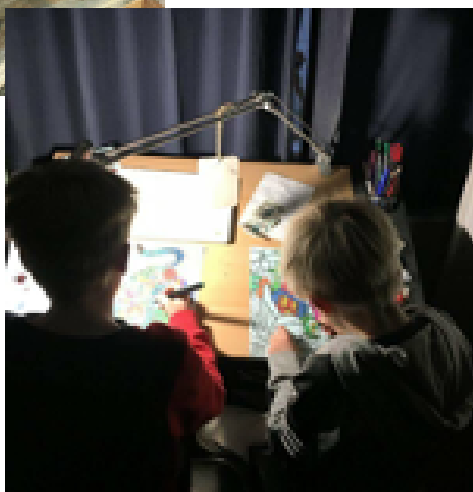
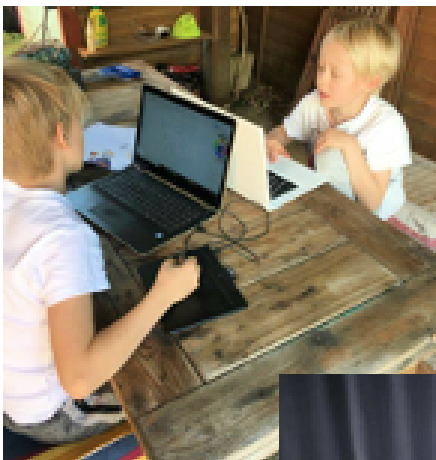


Hello! I'm Emma and one of the things I've been thinking about is what is it exactly that we have discovered over the past months from learning at home?

As a teacher-parent these have been interesting times. A previous home-educator, I welcomed the opportunity to jump back into home learning – the fond memories! Despite the anxiety, I was quite excited. The recent months have in fact been vastly different: not only have we not had the same freedom to facilitate the rich child-led learning that home education allows us, but of course the social side has been non-existent.

Many home-educating friends have had comments passed their way regarding a comparison of 'lockdown learning' to home education. They are NOT the same. Home education is rarely in the home; it's incredibly social! Lockdown learning has necessitated something quite different.

However, what these COVID-times have done is highlight the benefits of children developing and understanding their own learning styles.



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With younger children, there is a real opportunity to develop new interests and have the time to extend school set learning. If for example, studying the Romans triggered an interest – there has been time to go off and research in more depth, to make armour, role play and perhaps plan some post lockdown visits.

THE ROMANS

This surely demonstrates to children how we learn so much more when interested in the subject and how the whole family can enjoy. Similarly if learning about the Roman era turns you cold, it's time to approach it from a different angle, finding a 'hook' by which to excite/provoke/create success e.g. your budding artist/gamer could create a Roman villa on Minecraft or on a long roll of paper ...

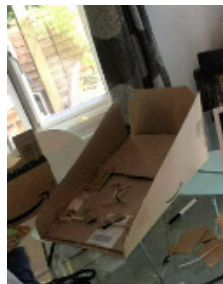
WW2

Not the Romans, but while the online reading on WW2 was becoming a little dry we decided to 'dig for victory' and when the school task was to write a postcard in role as an evacuee he wanted to do so in an authentic way and then played with editing tools to make it black and white and enlarge the ink pot.

PINBALL MACHINE MAKING

After some online work on angles, and a chance find of a video of how to make a pinball machine, my 9yo set about making this and we were able to enrich the worksheet learning with practical and meaningful discovery learning.

However, what we also have and should embrace, is older children learning to manage their own time, to learn to meet deadlines, and to manage many online platforms. As they return to school, we can extend this.



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There are many positives to take through to September – the opportunity for personalised learning and differentiation now that children can lead their own learning. They will have their own ways to bring it alive in a way that they had not previously recognised.

Children will have found new interests. In school, we can foster those – look at how to draw them in to the school topics. A therapist friend also highlighted to me how these last few months have enabled parents to genuinely meet basic and fundamental needs. We have had an opportunity to satisfy the lower needs of Maslow's hierarchy.

After 5 months of tending to the psychological needs we can feel confident that our children can return to school able to meet their full potential, ie the top of the pyramid.

My hope is that the creativity will flourish, and there will be deeper self-fulfilment. We just have to hope that schools adapt and have the opportunity to fully embrace the positives of the last few months, with no talk of 'catching up', or children being 'behind'.

Parents have had the opportunity to get to know their children as a learner, their strengths, fears, interests, trigger points and surely this can only be a positive takeaway. The challenge now is for schools to follow and build on this.

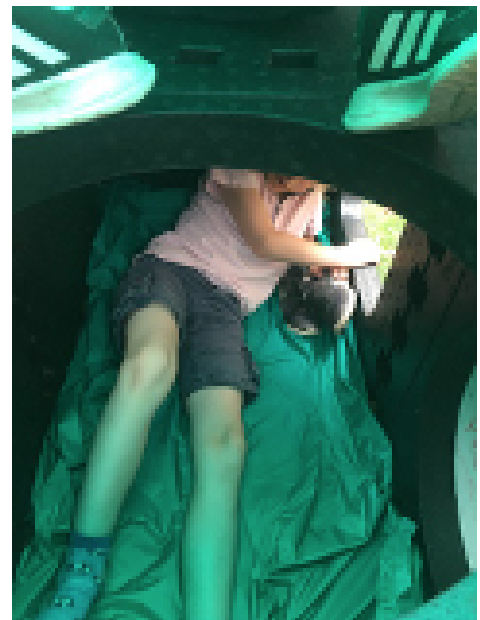
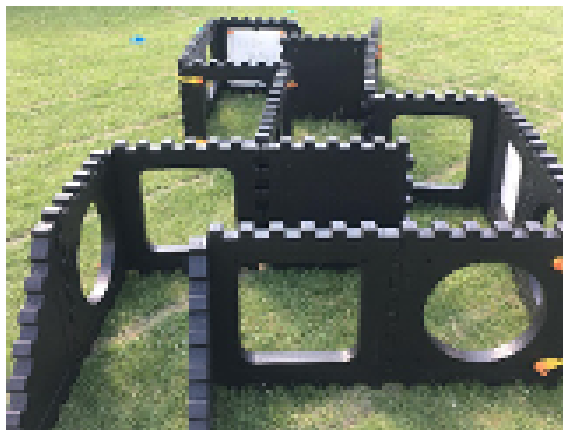
One of the ways that I am hoping to see schools build on this active learning, co-play and independence is through more resources like Kitcamp. My children have had lots of fun with ours at home and back in school it can be used brilliantly as we try to transition into our new normal: It is child led, creates distance if needed, can be easily washed, and is so versatile -it can literally be whatever they want it to be!

However you choose to play, it is play that is the most critical thing - it contains all the 'catch-up' that children need....

Emma



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*Kitcamp has been
amazing to explore!*



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