

Tuck Shop Trauma...

“This recipe is Foolproof” it said. Well, in that case, just call me a fool.

I'm not a baker. I'm not a mixologist. I'm not a writer. I'm not a fountain of knowledge about alcohol...though I do like to drink it. I'm not any of those things.

I am just a Mum.

But, by being 'just a mum', I also have to be many different things, or at least attempt to be.

The kids want a cake, I'll try and bake one.

The kids have had an arm mysteriously fall off one of their toys which they need to have sewn back on ([sorry Rabbit!](#)), I'll try and stitch it.

If one of the kids falls and hurts themselves, I scream at Daddy to sort it.

(I'm utterly useless with my own kids in this situation. A pained look accompanied by screaming and them holding their arm after a fall, I instantly assume it's broken).

Being 'just a mum' is actually pretty tough. We are required to wear many different hats, and even if we are not suited to some of those metaphorical hats, that doesn't matter when you're a mum. You often don't have much of a choice but to roll said hat up your arm like Indiana Jones, tip it at a

jaunty angle, pull your shoulders back and just get the chuff on with it.

Thinking about it, it's bloody exhausting this parenting lark, and responsible for at least 80% of my gin consumption, but I know deep down we wouldn't have it any other way.

Today, amongst other things, along with my swears hat and my 'who the feck thought this was a good idea' hat, I am wearing my bakers hat, probably along with half of my son's school, for tomorrow is...

TUCK SHOP DAY!

Ah, Tuck Shop.

It's changed a bit since my day. In my day, we used to get to go and choose pick and mix sweets and put them in a paper bag in the school hall. We then got to choose if we wanted a Panda Pop or a Calypso. Both full of e-numbers and other goodies certain to make you leap off the walls at home for a good few hours, before crashing and burning into a jibbering wreck on the living room floor shortly before tea time. I'm sure my mum loved it...ah, fond memories.

Tuck Shop nowadays is a more upmarket affair, almost resembling a kids afternoon tea. The kids file into the room in an orderly fashion, armed with a named paper bag and 35p (don't forget the 35p in the morning for each of them Gemma! Worst mum of the year Award awaits if you do that...). They enter the room filled with parent volunteers, who are full of nervous energy as the impending frenzy of sugar hungry kids awaits the signal from their teacher to proceed. The sight that greets them is one of childhood bliss. Home baked and shop bought cakes and biscuits adorn the tables like

jewels, twinkling in the luminous, strip light glow of the classroom. Their little eyes light up as they scour the tables, methodically assessing which offerings they are going to nab and scoff.

Once they have made the painstaking decision of which cakes to choose (they get to choose 3), they then pay their money and go on to collect a cup of juice or water, sadly not served in Bone China as school budgets aren't brilliant these days...

They then get to sit down and discuss current affairs, have a poll on whether we should leave or remain in the EU and mull over their future prospects whilst chomping on one of their cakes.

The other two remaining cakes get taken back to their classroom with them where they then get stuffed into their classroom trays so that the beautiful chocolate cupcake a mum, who was wearing her bakers hat the day before, has lovingly made and iced, now resembles a cow pat. You then get presented with your cow pat cupcake at the end of the school day and your child waits eagerly to watch you munch it right there and then in front of all the other parents because 'they saved it especially for you'. Ahhhhh, thanks honey, you shouldn't have.

No, really, you shouldn't... ☐

I think Tuck Shop is great. The kids love it and it's safe to say it's one of the highlights which is most anticipated at the end of each half term.



So today, I had my bakers hat on and I saw some cookies decorated with galaxies on...on Pinterest. Yes, that bugger again. Have I not learnt my lesson yet?!

You can see what they should have looked like from the image above.

The cookies came out fine, the decorating...not so much. To the point I gave up on that idea entirely and this was all I could muster...



I might have sworn a bit and I might have eaten 2 of the cookies in anger. When I say 'might' I mean I definitely did and now I am utterly ashamed of myself.

But do you know what, even though my cookies don't look like swirly galaxies of mystery, I am certain the kids will love them. To be honest, they would love a twix or a shop bought fairy cake with sprinkles on, as long as it's sugar laden, they're a winner.

So, to all you mums with their bakers hats on, who are winging it like me, I say well done.

You're having a go, wearing one of your many hats, high five to you. Having a go – that is the most important thing. Isn't that what we tell our kids?

If it doesn't turn out like Pinterest, who cares. Your kids will love the fact you've had a go, just for them and their school.

Now, I had better go and tidy up the shitstorm that is my kitchen...the cookies might not look like a galaxy of colour and mystery but my kitchen certainly does.

Where's the cleaning fairy when you sodding well need her?!

Peace out Knutters.

Gems.x

