



Headteacher's Newsletter – End of Summer Term 2017

Dear Parent and Carers,

They say time speeds up when you get older, but I cannot believe how quickly this term has flown by. As usual there is much to up-date you on but I would like to start this newsletter off by saying how much I have enjoyed working at Mill Water School. I have been very lucky to work in a fabulous building, with an experienced, well qualified and committed staff team. Most of all I have enjoyed being with the incredible children at Mill Water who have impressed me in so many ways. I will miss them very much and I hope to stay in touch.

Leadership Team Arrangements

As you will all be aware, Sarah Pickering returns to her role as Headteacher from September, she will continue to be very ably supported by Sally Cregan as Deputy Head (Teaching and Learning). The school had advertised for a second deputy to focus on Pastoral Care and Safeguarding and we held interviews recently. Unfortunately we were not able to appoint to the role at this time. We will review this in the Autumn term and will seek a second deputy to ensure the school has the capacity to continue its rapid pace of improvement. In the meantime the governors have appointed Lynne Hassel for support in the interim to ensure the school has leadership capacity to face all eventualities and to be able to support staff to deliver quality outcomes for our children. I do think it is important to take the time to get the right people in post for the long term future success of the school.

September Starters

From September we will welcome new teacher Jacob Peasley to be our teacher for class 7. We also welcome Mark Donnelly to be our 16+ Instructor. Jacob and Mark have very kindly provided a pen portrait to introduce themselves:



Hello all, my name is Jacob Peasley and I will be starting as the new member of the KS2 team here at Mill Water in September. This will be my second teaching job after two years teaching at Fosse Way School in Bath. My interest in teaching in an environment like Mill Water has been one I have had since a young age as I have a younger brother with Autism who attends Ellen Tinkham School. Alongside this, Mill Water is located very close to Exmouth where I lived until I moved to Bath to study and then work in my previous post.

I thought it would be nice to share a bit of information about myself before I begin in my new role. I am 24 years old and the middle brother of three. Before becoming a teacher I attended Bath Spa University and studied Education and Philosophy before undertaking my PGCE in Bath as well. Outside of work I enjoy a range of sports (in-particular football and running), music (I play the drums), art and reading. I am really looking forward to starting at Mill Water and cannot wait to get stuck in.

Mark Donnelly – 16+ Instructor

Mark originally studied music and teaching practice at degree level, working as a musician and tutor before settling in the charity sector and training as a National Standard Instructor in Bristol & North East Somerset, teaching school children with a wide range of abilities and learning needs. Mark progressed to work in Wiltshire and North Devon, working closely with schools and colleges to establish measures and teach a range of curriculum based workshops and skills sessions that enabled young people to travel more actively and sustainably, with a focus on health and well-being. Since 2016 Mark has worked for Devon County Council, assessing and training young people with Special Educational Needs between the ages of 16-19. This work provided valuable life skills and independence for young people, preparing individuals for later life, promoting social inclusion, access to education and access to employment.

With this range of experience and a commitment to furthering a specialism in SEN, Mark will be a creative and inspiring tutor, with a student focused holistic approach to the 6th form curriculum.

Silver Bat Buddy Award

Mill Water School has received a Silver Bat Buddy Award from the Devon Greater Horseshoe Bat Project reflecting the focused work the children have done on conserving and raising awareness of this important species.

The children have worked hard and immensely enjoyed finding out about these fascinating creatures. We have looked at encouraging bats directly through creating bat boxes, insect hotels and through bat friendly planting and indirectly by telling children, families and anyone we can find how important Devon is for the international population of these animals. We have learnt about them through visiting their winter roost at Beer Quarry Caves, having Bat Week in which all learning became distinctly batty including bat art, maths, cookery, story and science. The anabat detector lent to us by the project showed a healthy population of many kinds of bat including the Greater Horseshoe, we plan to borrow it again next year to see if our efforts have paid off. We've been so busy with the topic that we earned the silver award in our first year and hope to earn gold next year as we continue our conservation efforts.



Sports Day

Thank you to all parents and carers who came to support the Ducks, the Tigers, the Peacocks, and the Hawks. We had a fantastic day with just the right blend of inclusive sport but also competitive races and fun events. Well done to all our winners on the day who received a bespoke handmade medal from Andrew and the team. It was wonderful to see children across the school taking a full part in the days sporting events. Many thanks to all staff who worked hard support children to take part, but special thanks to Andy, Cathrine, Rowan and Andrew who did the planning and organisation to make it so successful.



Heroes of the Jurassic Coast Murals

On 5th July there was a presentation of a new book for each of the pupils in class 10. The book, entitled 'One Of Our Beavers Is Lost' is the latest in a series of 'Heroes of the Jurassic Coast' books written and illustrated by children from local primary and secondary schools. Mill Water School was invited to join the project by The Arts Society of Budleigh Salterton. While some of the school wrote parts of the story, others created large murals depicting scenes from the book.

Class 10 pupils listened to the synopsis last month and have since been working on two large paintings. They have worked together extremely well and made all the decisions from which colours to use to the subject matter. One board shows a collie dog surrounded by beavers on the beach while the other shows the same dog swimming in the sea surrounded by jellyfish and some more beavers.



These were on display during the presentation event in the church in Budleigh Salterton and will now go on display during the summer months around the town. The book is available in local bookshops as well as online at www.heroesofthejurassiccoast.org where you will also find a map showing the positions of the murals. All profits from book sales will benefit local charities.

We were very happy to be part of this project and are already thinking about what we will paint next year.

The Wizard of Oz 2017

The pupils of Mill Water School were proud to present their very own version of The Wizard of Oz. Every pupil in the school had a part to play in the production in one way or another. While many performed on stage, some painted scenery and others made props or helped make costumes.



And then there were those who acted as stage hands and supported in changing scenery and getting props on and off stage. Each class was given a scene to practice and the results were fantastic. Particular highlights included a song and dance routine by the 6th form, Dorothy's brothers and sisters doing a line dance and the classes 3 and 4 becoming a twister. There were also some excellent solo performances by Megan, Harry and Kieran.

The main characters played their parts beautifully. Dorothy sang sweetly and confidently and led the Lion, Tin Man and Scarecrow down the yellow brick road towards a happy ending. In the final scene the Wizard says, 'It's the differences that make us beautiful' before the whole school came on stage to sing 'I'm a believer'.



More than 150 people came to see the performances and we were very grateful for all of the lovely comments they made following the performances. We were very proud of how hard every pupil worked to prepare for the show and also wanted to say thank you to the parents and carers who supported their children with learning lines, practicing songs or making costumes. Thank you to Simon, Zoe and Andre for your incredible work on this.

A HUGE Thank You - Steam and Teas

The PTFA would like to thank John & Margie Edmonds for kindly hosting "Steams and Teas" at their home. And also, a special thank you to Zoe Gilbert for arranging the event. After two late donations, the final total raised was an incredible £1007.33! A wonderful afternoon was enjoyed by all, many thanks to everyone who came and supported the school at this event.

Safeguarding News Update – Sarah Pickering

Police forces have raised child safety concerns about a new Snapchat feature that reveals users' locations amid fears it could be used for stalking. We would like to share an article about a new feature on snap chat which allows children to share their location. The article linked above also covers how to turn on "ghost mode" which hides the location feature. Young teenagers are the most common users of snap chat, so child protection bodies are concerned they will not foresee the potential risk of sharing detailed information such as journeys to school and/or friend's houses.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/2017/06/23/police-issue-child-safety-warning-snapchat-maps-update-reveals/>

Smoking On-Site

You will all be very aware that smoking on the site of any school is against the law, but you may not know that vaping or using any kind of e-cigarette are not allowed either. We have adopted Devon's Non-Smoking Policy. Please can you remember not to vape or use e-cigarettes anywhere on the school grounds....staff will give you a reminder if you forget.

Wanjawulo Project

Thank you very much to those who took part in the raffle held during the Wizard of Oz performance last week. We raised a grand total of £187 for the Wanjawulo project in Uganda, and these funds will be used directly to support Ugandan children with additional needs when Sarah C, Tom, Tori and Ashleigh visit over the summer. If anyone is interested you can follow the project on the Facebook page - just search for Wanjawulo and you will find it!



Sad Farewells

We are sad to be saying goodbye to some members of staff at the end of this term, Heather Cleal will be retiring after many years of dedicated service to the school; Donna Jones is relocating to a school in the North. Anna Higgins, Zoe Gilbert and Jade Herbert are leaving to further their career opportunities. We wish them all the very best for the future, and will say good bye to them officially in our end of term leavers assembly.

INSET days for 2017-18:

Non-pupil Day: Staff Training **Monday 4th September 2017**

Non-pupil Day: Staff Training **Tuesday 5th September 2017**

Non-pupil Day: Staff Training **Monday 30th October 2017**

Non-pupil Day: Staff Training **Wednesday 3rd January 2018**

Non-pupil Day: Staff Training **Monday 16th April 2018**