



Headteacher's Newsletter – March 2017

Dear Parent and Carers,

Welcome to the latest edition of the Mill Water school newsletter. We have done well so far to avoid any really terrible weather, but we are not through to Spring yet! I thought I would remind you that we have revised our school closure procedures in case of bad weather or other unforeseen circumstance. Please could you keep our admin team up to date with your mobile number – we will use our parent text service to make sure you have information as soon as we have it. School closure information will be placed on the website and of course we will contact school transport with information as we receive it.

World Book Day

We had a really brilliant celebration of World Book Day last Friday – it was a real treat to see so many of our children dressed as their favourite characters and having lots of fun sharing their costumes in assembly - thanks to all staff who dressed up and organised the day in school, but also huge thanks to parents who supported their children in making a change to different clothes, we do know that many of our young people do struggle when things are different, thank you for making this a successful day.

Seaton Guides

Seaton Guides have very kindly donated nearly £100 to Mill Water school following their fundraising efforts – we really appreciate the work of this group who also have youngsters from Mill Water attending their sessions. I have asked the class team to decide how to spend this donation on something exciting to support learning in class or in the playground.

Orchard Update

It will be my first Spring at Mill Water, I can't wait to see what the apple blossom in the orchard looks like. Tom Neusinger is our Grade E TA responsible for outdoor learning, and also a talented carpenter. Tom has built a wheelchair accessible tree house in the orchard which looks stunning and will be a fantastic play and learning resource for our children. Tom will update you with more news in an orchard special newsletter soon.

News from Janet Ackford, School Physiotherapist:

'I know some of you may know already, that I am taking some time away from school to travel around Europe. I think I am in my 16th year here and just felt the need for an adventure and it is good timing for me personally. My role will be covered by a physiotherapy assistant from Vranth House and there will be 2 weeks hand over time after the Easter holidays until the 27th April. Please let me know if there are concerns regarding any children/equipment in your classes that I could possibly sort out before I leave. See you next January!!'. I am sure you will all join me in wishing Janet the very best on her travels.

Feedback from Parent Survey

Thank you to everyone who completed the parent survey and returned it to school, I really appreciate your time and feedback. Many of you contributed thoughtful ideas as to how we can improve even further as a school and we are taking action on a number of these as we speak. I have collated all the feedback and will be returning this to all parents very shortly. We also ask children (where appropriate and meaningful) and staff to contribute to surveys and will use this to focus on key areas of school development.

Class 2 Teacher Interviews

We were very pleased at the high number of applications for this post. As a consequence the school was able to choose from a very strong field of candidates. Candidates were asked to interview, prepare and deliver a presentation and also prepare and deliver an assessed teaching activity in EYFS Class 1. Candidates also had lunch with member of the school council. The successful candidate was Emma Whittock who is due to start at the school after the Easter holidays. In the meantime the class is led and managed by an experienced grade E level TA, supported by Sally Cregan, Deputy Head. We look forward to welcoming Emma to Mill Water School.

Lambing Sunday - 19th March

As many of you will be aware, Bickton College's annual event, Lambing Sunday, is happening in a couple of weeks. For any of you who haven't visited before, this is a day when the college opens many of its departments to visitors, and there are lots of stalls and activities to take part in across the campus, as well as being able to see the lambing shed.

Mill Water School is going to take part with a stall at the front of the school to raise awareness and some money. We are planning to hold a Tombola and a Cake Stall, as well as an Enterprise stall to sell some of the pupils' creations. Lucy the School Dog will be present, and we will also be offering tours of the outside area including the new Lottery funded accessible tree house built in the Orchard.

Could we ask you please to send in items for the tombola, and cakes on **17th March**! If any of you would like to suggest other games/activities we could easily set up we would love to hear from you!

Safeguarding News

I updated you all in the last newsletter about the structure to leadership team here at Mill Water. We have clear roles for senior leaders. Sally Cregan is deputy head focussing on all issues regarding curriculum, teaching, learning and recording progress. Sarah Pickering is deputy head and will have responsibility for all pastoral issues.

Sarah's role includes the key responsibility of leading safeguarding across the school. Sarah is The Designated Leader for safeguarding, supported by Simon Winward and Sally Cregan as Deputy Designated Leaders for safeguarding.

Meet the Governors

Many of you have asked to know more about Mill Water School governors – our governors are unsung heroes who put in a great deal of time in to support our school, a lot of their work goes on unseen – I will add governor news to our regular newsletter to support the team.



Maggie Carter is a Local Authority Governor but also serves as the Chair of the Governing Body. She currently works for Scomis (part of Devon County Council) but previously worked for Children's and Young People's services in Plymouth.

Maggie has been on the Governing Body for nearly three years, so has seen the school make considerable improvements over that time.

And finally.....

Mill Water School PTFA

I thought I should celebrate the work of the PTFA, who do so much behind the scenes to support the work of the school. The PTFA have raised and spent a great deal of money to support class teams in the work they do with your children. Just recently the PTFA have spent money to improve resources in our Early Years class bases and are always looking for projects to support across the school – many thanks for all your hard work and support, it is much appreciated. Keep an eye on the text service for more dates from the PTFA.

Dates for your diary:

PTFA Disco 18th March

Lambing Sunday 19th March

Last day of Term Friday 31st March

Pupils Return on Wednesday 19th April

Very best wishes
Clive