



Friday 5th February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Coronavirus

It is good to know that Coronavirus (COVID-19) case numbers are continuing to fall in Devon, but they are still around the same levels now as they were at the beginning of December. Cases are highest among the 20 to 39 years old age group. Perhaps it's the one time I can be glad for getting old.

Steve Brown, Director of Public Health Devon, said on Thursday that while the fall in cases is good, we are still seeing the virus spreading in some workplaces, often attributed to car sharing.

Mr Brown also urged critical workers and people who care for others who are vulnerable to use the new community testing centres opening in Devon.

The first of 13 community testing centres opened at County Hall on Topsham Road in Exeter, last week. Mr Brown said: "We know that one in three people who have coronavirus don't have symptoms at all, and while some people are involved in regular testing programmes in their workplaces, these testing centres are for people who aren't otherwise involved in any testing programmes at all."

It's using the rapid tests that give results in around 30 minutes. Tests are aimed particularly at critical workers and those in high-risk occupations who have to leave home to attend work, such as taxi and bus drivers or retail workers, but they are also for people who are in contact with others who are vulnerable, such as carers.

The testing is to identify anyone with the virus, so that they can be asked to self-isolate immediately, to prevent others from catching it.

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/document/coronavirus-testing-in-devon/>

We are continuing to test staff in school twice per week.

Free School Meals

Families of children currently receiving free school meals will automatically be sent supermarket vouchers to help them buy food over the week-long holiday to replace the meals their child would have received during term-time. The vouchers – worth £15 a week for each child – can be redeemed in major supermarkets across Devon. Arrangements are in place for families who cannot get to a supermarket.

Many families in Devon have seen their financial circumstances change due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. If you didn't previously qualify for free school meals but your income has recently reduced or stopped, please apply online to check if you are eligible:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/school-meals>

Children's Mental Health

If you're concerned about the mental health of a young person aged 11 to 25 years old, why not check out Kooth. It's an online mental wellbeing community that offers free and confidential mental health support to young people in Devon. Kooth has unveiled its "Don't Do It Alone" campaign, designed to encourage open conversations around mental health so children and young people know they are not alone with their struggles.

<https://www.kooth.com/>

Evidence for learning

As always, please keep us updated with any news from home. You can use Evidence for Learning to tell us what your child has been doing during the week or at a weekend. I am really enjoying sending certificates home to celebrate the work your children are doing. It is in part down to your commitment to home learning too, so a big thank you from staff to those who have facilitated a zoom call or sent in photos of your walks/cooking/relaxing etc. Please remember to share with us what is working and what is not, to ensure we are providing the best offer for your child. We also use Evidence for Learning to tell you about your child's learning and experiences in school. If you need more information about Evidence for Learning, please contact Kayleigh Price at school.

Wishing you a safe and dry weekend

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S A Pickering', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

S A Pickering
Head Teacher