



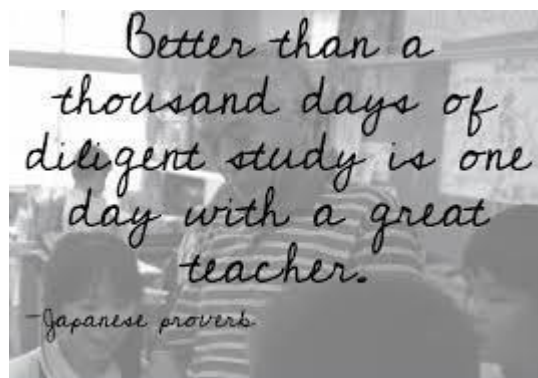
# Mill Water School

admin@millwater.devon.sch.uk | www.millwater.devon.sch.uk | 01395 568890

24<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

Even though it was not a surprise to learn the lock down was being extended for another 3 weeks, it still weighed no less heavily on us all I'm sure. Please continue to tell me/us how you are feeling/managing not just what you have (or in my case haven't) achieved at your home school this week.



*(and that means you right now)*

Please remember we are on email, phone, face to face 2 meters apart (and in pink marigolds in some cases) if needed. The main thing is that you know we are here and thinking of you all often.

We continue to follow government advice which changes day by day in regards to how we should be working and interacting with our pupils. Socially distancing is a challenge for most of our children so those that are in are either by themselves or in 2s if they can play alone. Our children find this very hard and I have to admit I too struggle to stay apart from the very children I want to feel safe and reassured.



The building remains closed to most, but staff are working hard to provide online and physical resources for their pupils. Classes 5, 7, 9, 10 and 6<sup>th</sup> form have tried out Zoom sessions and these have been very successful. It has given some of our pupils chance to catch up with their teachers and even more importantly their friends. If you think your child would benefit from an individual or group session don't hesitate to get in touch with us. Our IT Technician is very skilled at remotely helping families use the technology if needed.

Staff have driven out to families to deliver food vouchers and/or resources, but in every case have delivered a big smile. It has been lovely to see so many of you enjoying the weather in your gardens or getting out for long walks. Don't forget the SEND guidance has changed meaning you can drive out for appropriate exercise or longer walks if helpful. We can provide a supporting letter to share with police should you be stopped or questioned. One parent shared with me that just feeling the fresh air and sun on their faces without



having to rush, was joy. We may even have a toilet training success-fingers crossed. Others have shared with me that certain ingrained habits have fallen away because it just hasn't been possible to do but easier to show why not.

These successes don't take away however, that there have been challenges for some of our children too. This is a very testing time for many families so feel free to share any ideas you may have to make life easier. You are an incredibly resourceful bunch and if there is a problem I know there's a strong chance one of you may have an answer. I know there has been success in purchasing resources with direct payments money, including paddling pools, slides and iPads.

This week has seen us celebrate a 40<sup>th</sup> birthday in school and we had a cream tea baked for us by Beth Legowska (parent of WL in class 2). Thank you to you Beth who made us all about half a stone heavier in just one lunch. The lunch club continued on Thursday when Beth sent in samosas, pakoras and three different raitas including burnt lime. Interestingly staff are now very keen to work Thursdays, I can't think why.



Our fundraiser Georgia has received a very generous donation from Clinton Estates, who are committed to supporting the local community at this time. We are using it to create some of the resource packs that will be coming to you over the next few weeks. Teachers and teams will be putting their heads together to decide the best way to spend the money and enhance our virtual school offer to you. If there is something your child really enjoys that we have in school, let us know and perhaps we can source it for you to use in the home (no swimming pool requests, please). Please can you help us by letting us have any pots back in next week's delivery.

I hope you are enjoying our [learning resources](#) on the [website](#) and [facebook](#). There are songs, games, quizzes, stories, bucket sessions, an outdoor learning tour, photos of pupils learning at home and much more. Any ideas you want to share/see up there let us know.

Mill Water has been in the news recently following our successful sing and sign cover of [Fight Song](#) which is now featured on the [Devon County Council website](#). Huge congratulations to everyone involved, in particular Sharon & Nai Parnell who led the initiative. After I finally learnt the right song I was glad to be a part of it because it was another way for us to continue doing something we all love and to feel connected. Huge congratulations to Bradley who had a starring role on Devon radio. He represented Mill Water very well at an ungodly time in the morning for a teenage boy!

I will continue to update you in regards to changes from government, Public health England and Devon County Council. Remember I am in school every day and some staff across the week so there is someone here to answer question, signpost and respond to concerns. It isn't nice to be here without the key ingredient that normally makes it so much fun. Your children are missed every day.