



Mill Water School

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

Friday 1st May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope that you and your families are staying well and staying active during this difficult time.

I have enjoyed seeing your photos and videos this week, please keep sending them in - they make me smile every time. We continue to search for the best ways to support you virtually and staff are becoming adept at story telling selfies, music and exercise sessions. André has already uploaded over 150 videos for us on the website. I think we are keeping him very amused - just think of the outtakes!!

Staff have reported lots of lovely clips being uploaded to EFL and/or through email which Kayleigh is looking through. There are some fantastic home learning ideas and I particularly enjoyed watching a lounge obstacle course being used to great effect. I may try it when I get home - watch this space.

I continue to meet regularly with Devon leads for Social Care, Public Health and School Nursing to ensure we are up to date with latest government advice. Any new guidance is added to our website and all the current links go through to the latest DfE, DCC and PHE websites.

I represented Devon special schools at a meeting with MPs this week. We discussed the specific Devon context in regards to coming out of lockdown. As yet there is no clear plan, but please be assured I am giving a strong message to the DfE about the need for a specific set of scientifically supported criteria for SEND schools and families. I am very aware that a lot of the national guidance has been too general, misleading and woolly. Many of you have told me that due to the current pandemic continuing, you don't feel confident in sending your children back to us even if schools are reopened before September. I can give you my assurances that I will respect your wishes and that this will not be a problem with the authorities in terms of attendance. Your health and well-being continues to be the driving factor of our decision making and when plans are made I will share them with you immediately.

Transitions are a concern for some of you, I know. I am raising this with Devon education leads but also putting in a lot of work behind the scenes with staff. We need to establish how we can ensure smooth transitions out of Mill Water and successful starts in new provisions. There will be different ways to achieve this, but if you have any ideas please let me know. We are creating a virtual tour of our school for pupils joining us in September and I know some post 16 colleges and adult provisions are doing the same sort of thing.

This month there is something a little bit different for you to get involved with...



Are you up for the 2.6 Challenge?

Last Sunday, 26th April, was the day the Virgin Money London Marathon was supposed to take place, with tens of thousands of participants set to run just over 26 miles through the heart of the British capital. The event could not take place and has been postponed until October.

The organisers of the marathon have instead launched a challenge to bring the nation together. Sunday 26th April was the first day of the National 2.6 Challenge. Taking part is simple - the 2.6 Challenge can be any form of physical activity that works for you. It just needs to include the numbers 2 and 6! For example, 26 miles, 2.6 miles, 2.6 km, 26 repetitions or for 26 minutes etc. (I told my family I would stand up whilst eating 26 fairy cakes!!)

You can complete challenges in your home, your garden, if you have one, or as part of your daily exercise. For example, you could go up and down the stairs 26 times, dance for 26 minutes, do a 2.6 mile run, bounce on your trampoline 26 times – anything you like - let me know what ideas you have and I can share them with others so we can celebrate your success and achievements.

The **Mill Water 2.6 Challenge** will last throughout May – the only requirement is that [the activity must follow the government guidelines](#) on exercise and social distancing, so remember to stay safe.

You could do the challenges on your own and try to better your score each time. You could challenge a family member to see who gets the best time, distance or the most repetitions. Better still, you could try to get the whole family involved and aim to complete '5 a day' between you all.

We wish you the best of luck with the 2.6 Challenge!

Let's all be Home Heroes

The weather looks dry for the coming weekend, if not particularly warm, so I hope that you will be able to make a start on your 2.6 challenge activities.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Pickering

Headteacher