



# Mill Water School

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Dear Parents/Carers

Following Boris's address to the nation, I was relieved to hear schools are able to carry on as we have been since 1<sup>st</sup> September. The only change we can make is to reduce the number of office based staff in the building, which we will do on a school business priority basis.

We have received the following guidance from DCC in regards to Covid-19 Testing:

*We are aware that there have been some significant problems with access to COVID-19 testing. You will have seen on the news that this is not unique to Devon but none the less is of significant concern. DCC and PHE have escalated this regionally and nationally but it is unlikely we will see a rapid improvement.*

*Below are the steps, in order, that should be followed to secure a test:*

- **Individuals should only get tested if they have symptoms of coronavirus.**
- Parents or carers of children attending school or school staff with symptoms of coronavirus should book a test as normal via the [government website](#) or by calling 119.
- If they are unable to book a local testing slot, individuals should complete the appropriate forms by following the links below:
  - Children under the age of 5: [Urgent Referral Form - Under 5's](#)
  - School aged Children (5-18): [School Aged Children](#)
  - NHS/Health/Care workers: [NHS/Health/Care Professionals](#)
  - All other individuals: [Urgent Referral Form - Adults](#)

Confirmation of a test booking should include a QR code so please do not visit a test centre unless you have been sent a QR code as you may be refused entry.

As children need their parents to conduct the test for them (or help them do it themselves) it is important that when attending a test centre they enter the self-test lane. Failure to do this may result in the test not being available.

Schools only need to send home bubbles if there has been a confirmed case or you have been advised to by PHE, even if there has been a delay in getting tested or getting the test result back.

There are a variety of forums and events for SEND parents currently being advertised on our Facebook page - please have a look.

We are very keen to keep you in the loop in regards to school business so I would like to invite you to a virtual coffee morning at **10am on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October**. If there are certain topics you would like to hear about please let me know, but I intend to share with you how we are working safely and meeting the needs of all our pupils during a time of such restrictions and regulations.

Our therapy dog, Molly, is now allowed to greet pupils at the door, visit classrooms and carry out some 1:1 sessions. The pupils have loved saying good morning and Molly has walked to class with Jack, Paris, Warrick and Ollie.

I have given out certificates for sharing treats, kindness, being safe in the pool area, excellent kicking in a swimming lesson, helping me with jobs and giving support to a friend on a challenging walk. Well done to everyone who received a head teacher's award this week.

Classes have continued to get out and about as much as possible. Well done to class 8 who have increased their stamina and trekked many miles this week and class 11 who have carried out a lot of helpful jobs in the grounds and orchard.



### Free school meals and funding

Since the start of the recent pandemic the number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals has risen by an additional 1,270 (April – July 2020).

**If you are in receipt of certain benefits, your child can get free school meal.** Please see the [Free School Meal Portal](#) where you can make a quick application, eligibility can be assessed and an outcome given instantly.

This is particularly key where children automatically get universal infant free school meals if they're in reception class, year 1 and year 2.

Any child that is found to be eligible for free school meals will also attract additional funding for Mill Water, known as pupil premium funding, which can be used to support children in school and it makes a big difference to schools and eligible pupils.



The NHS have launched the contact tracing app for COVID-19. Visit our [School Website](#) for information and download links.