



Mill Water School

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Friday 9th July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

As you will be aware, we have had two separate positive cases of Covid-19 this week, resulting in three classes having to isolate, as well as children who share transport with the positive cases.

The South West Health Protection Team have been involved in our decisions to ask children to self-isolate, and are happy with the steps we have and are taking to keep the school Covid safe. They are not treating the cases as an outbreak, as they are not related. They are assuming community transmission which is beyond our control. We do know a number of local schools have more than one year group isolating, so we are not unique in our position.

In fact, there has been a 75% increase in local cases, with 169 positive cases reported in East Devon in the last week, and 345 in Exeter. Nearly all the cases are in children and younger adults.

The SWHPT have also advised that we should continue to send children home who are experiencing symptoms of Covid, **however mild**. Thank you to those parents who have been able to collect their children and get them tested this week. Whilst there is always an expectation that parents/carers should be contactable during the school day, it is imperative that we can speak to someone straightaway whilst we are experiencing a higher number of children with potential symptoms/needing to self isolate.

There has been an increase in the number of our staff also being asked to self-isolate, because their own children are being sent home from local schools or because they are being contacted by Track and Trace.

It is ironic that we have experienced these two positive cases and an increase in the number of staff having to self-isolate just as we are approaching Step 4 of the roadmap out of lockdown. The Department for Education have just published a guide for parents setting out what will happen at Step 4 on 19th July; it can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Mill Water School summer term finishes on 27th July, and we do not propose changing our Covid Risk Assessment before the end of term. This is in line with advice from the Director of Public Health Devon who is [encouraging people to continue taking steps to minimise risk to themselves and others](#).

We have a number of planned events next week, which we are going to continue to hold as they were planned in accordance with our Covid Risk Assessment. I'm sure you'll agree it is important we carry on with these events so our pupils start their holidays with some lovely memories of the summer term. On Monday Mill Water is having a very much anticipated visit from Colourscape, which is an enormous dome providing a fully immersive colour and light experience. Later on in the week we will be visited by Double Elephant who will be hosting leaf printing and monoprinting workshops with our pupils, and finally we will have African Drumming lessons! Look out for photos in the Newsletter next week.

<https://www.doubleelephant.org.uk>

Devon County Council have just launched their new website for parents/carers of children with SEND. It can be found at:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/education-and-families/send-local-offer>

Yours sincerely

S A Pickering
Headteacher