



Mill Water School

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Friday 25th June 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

The COVID-19 case rate in Devon has been increasing over the past couple of weeks, a pattern which is reflected both regionally and nationally. Devon has reported 440 new cases this week, with a rate of 54.8 per 100,000. Across the districts in Devon, Exeter has the highest rate of COVID-19 cases, many of which relate to a couple of recent outbreaks. Driving the UK-wide escalation is the latest Delta strain of the virus, because it spreads more easily between people than previous variants of coronavirus. [Public Health England have some useful information about COVID-19 variants on their website.](#)

Please be aware that if you or members of your family are experiencing possible COVID symptoms (a high temperature, or a new and continuous cough, or a change to usual sense of taste or smell), you need to take a PCR test. You cannot rely on lateral flow tests where there are symptoms.

Steve Brown, Director of Public Health Devon, makes it clear.

"Lateral flow device tests are for people who do not show any symptoms of having coronavirus.

"If you have any of the symptoms, you must self-isolate immediately and arrange a free PCR test. These are tests that are sent to a laboratory to be analysed and you will hear your result within a few days. [You can book a polymerase chain reaction \(PCR\) test online](#), or by phoning 119.

"While awaiting your result, you must still self-isolate. Self-isolating is a vital step in preventing the spread of coronavirus and it's essential that we strictly follow that rule."

If you test negative with a PCR test, you would not need to continue self-isolating unless there are other reasons to do so, which are:

- you live with someone else who has tested positive
- you live with someone who has symptoms, and has not had a test yet
- you've been told to self-isolate because you've been in close contact with someone else who has tested positive
- you had a PCR test because you'd previously had a positive result for a lateral flow (LFD) test and there were more than two days between those tests.

Coronavirus spreads through social contact, so the government announcement that the lifting of many restrictions will be delayed until Monday 19 July is good from the public health perspective, because most of the rules limiting social contact will remain in place for a while longer. However, it is not so good for us because it means that we have to keep our bubbles in place and will not be able to hold our Sports Day Event this term. Our plan is to delay it until we come back in September. We will let you have a date for this as soon as we can. We will still be holding our Leavers Assembly, now scheduled for Thursday 22nd July. This is a change of date due to a clash with another event on the 21st July.

We have welcomed two new Teaching Assistants this week, Amy Martin and Helen Hughes. We will also have a new Premises Manager, Becky Toft, and School Business Manager, Paula Harris, starting their new roles in September.

We will be saying goodbye to our current school business manager Gail Evans, after more than 20 years at Mill Water. We know she'll have a wonderful retirement spending time dancing and with her grandchildren. We wish her well in her new chapter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized capital 'A' followed by a horizontal line.

S A Pickering
Headteacher