



Friday 18th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

School News

We have had another week filled with exciting activities for our pupils. A group from class 12 have started their travel training programme, which entails practising a range of independence and communication skills. The group behaved impeccably and managed all the expectations of different public transport as well as money skills and safety. David their teacher was very proud of the group.

A class from lower school took part in some beach art, which although meant half the beach came back with them, has encouraged team-working skills, following the rules and their creative flair. I am looking forward to seeing the photos once they're uploaded. It was a happy class that skipped back into school that day.

The outdoor team have taken groups to Woodbury common and the beach to make the most of our natural surroundings and good weather. We need to get better at tracking our steps because as a school we have covered many miles this week.

Annual Reviews and Termly Teacher Meetings

We will be writing to you soon, with calendar dates for your diary that will include your parent/teacher consultation dates for this term. If your child's annual review happens this term you won't have another formal meeting unless requested, but everyone else will receive information about when these will take place.

As a staff body we are discussing how to keep you involved as families, even though we are unable to have you in as easily as before. There will be some opportunities to meet online so if this is a problem for you please don't miss out but let us know and we will find ways to enable you to take part.

Coughs and Colds

Even though the weather is lovely we are starting to see seasonal coughs and colds. A lot of schools are insisting on tests for children displaying any kind of cough, before they return to school. This is starting to have an impact on staffing as the entire family has to self-isolate. We will do everything in our power to keep all bubbles running, but please also recognise that the actions of other schools can have a knock on to our establishment too. You will have read that the testing system is breaking down, but we have heard of families getting tests by continually refreshing the website until a slot becomes available locally.

Please be assured that if we do have anyone displaying symptoms at school or have any positive cases linked to the school, we will follow the Public Health England (PHE) and Local Authority guidance on cleaning and disinfecting rooms and equipment. Children or staff who have been in close contact with a confirmed case will be notified and will be expected to self-isolate accordingly. This may result in advice from PHE to partially or fully close the school buildings. We do of course want everyone back at school but it is very important you follow the advice given above. We will be following the same procedures for staff. Thank you for your support in keeping everyone as safe as possible.

You may find the following item from today's **Devon County Council's Connect Me newsletter** helpful:
<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDEVONCC/bulletins/2a10c80>

Parents urged to help keep schools safe

There's always a rise in the number of bugs and illness at the start of term, and this year for obvious reasons, there has been a heightened awareness of when our children feel unwell, though in most cases this will not be coronavirus (COVID-19).

However, coronavirus has not gone away so you can't rule it out, especially as children and young people experience much milder symptoms of the virus than adults.

We've created some useful resources to help you identify the symptoms of coronavirus compared to a cold or seasonal flu and what action you need to take if your child or anyone in your household develops symptoms of coronavirus. You can find them on our website.

It's extremely important that anyone with coronavirus symptoms stays at home and gets tested to avoid the risk of spreading the virus to others, including the more vulnerable in our communities.

That means if your child, or anyone in your household, has any of the symptoms of coronavirus, no matter how mild, you must keep your child off school and self-isolate your whole household while the person with symptoms gets tested and waits for the results. Just the person with symptoms needs to get tested. If you don't have symptoms, you don't need to get tested unless you are asked to by a health professional, but you do need to self-isolate until your household member gets their results.

I hope you all enjoy your weekend.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Pickering
Head Teacher Mill Water