



4<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

## Returning to school next week

I hope you had an enjoyable summer holiday whether you had a staycation or travelled elsewhere.

We will reopen on Monday 7th September for all pupils and we are really looking forward to seeing them all again. Staff have been in for the past two days preparing and receiving training in our new risk assessments and ways of working. I know everybody is desperate to see the children and get back to as close to normal routines as possible.

We have all been affected by Covid 19 but to varying degrees so please remember, whatever you think about the current situation, there are policies and procedures I have to adhere to, to ensure the safety of the whole community and the spectrum of pupils we educate. On the plus side, the rates of infection remain very low in Devon, so we return to school with the same precautions that we took before the holiday.

To remind you, these are the precautions that we are taking:

- Updating our risk assessments to ensure we are as safe as we can be and regularly reviewing them based on latest guidance and sharing them with the Covid governor committee
- Maintaining social distance as far as is possible in a school setting, taking into account the best interest of all out pupils
- Maintaining group 'bubbles' in school to avoid mixing of pupils
- Staggering playtimes to ensure fewer pupils are in shared spaces
- Pupils eating in classrooms to ensure large groups are not together in shared spaces
- Ensuring that all pupils and staff wash their hands regularly and sanitise their hands where appropriate
- Ensuring the school is cleaned effectively and regularly, especially shared spaces like toilets and sensory rooms
- Swimming pool changing rooms are to be used on a rota system so groups don't mix
- Parents who transport their child to school being asked to remain in their car and allowing staff to collect the children. (*We thank you for your cooperation with this.*)
- Following a one-way system at the beginning and end of day to reduce congestion in the main corridor at transition time
- Ensuring that anyone who shows symptoms (or has someone in their household showing symptoms) does not attend school and follows advice regarding self-isolating and getting tested as soon as possible
- Minimising contact with and limiting the number of non-essential visitors on site
- Arranging virtual meetings where possible (such as Annual Reviews).

We will all work together to make our school community safe for everyone. If you have any questions, please contact any member of SLT via the school office on 01395 568890.

## Face coverings

The biggest change over the summer holidays has been the confusing guidance on using face coverings in schools. Mill Water is a relatively small school and we are fortunate that class sizes are smaller than in most mainstream schools. Our corridors aren't as busy as large schools and pupils don't change classes often. Based on our assessment of risk and the safety measures in place, we are not requiring pupils to wear face coverings. We will review this regularly to comply with health advice.

## Transport

We have been informed that school transport will operate as normal from next week and you should have heard from transport about the arrangements for your child. Escorts and drivers may be wearing face coverings but this will vary from route to route.

The car park and corridors get very congested at end of the day and our priority is traffic and Covid safety for all pupils. As a result, **please be aware your child may** arrive home 10 mins either side of their allotted return time.

We are really looking forward to seeing everyone again next week. Despite the current restrictions on our lives, we are sure it's going to be a great term at Mill Water. Although the way we operate has changed we still have a full and exciting curriculum offer and we are sure that pupils will really benefit from being back at school with their friends. Our priority is everybody's health, wellbeing and security so if there are key bits of information you wish us to know that will help your child's transition back to school, please let us know.

I hope you enjoy the first September weekend and we look forward to welcoming your children back on Monday

Yours sincerely

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

S A Pickering

Head Teacher  
Mill Water School