



Headteacher's Newsletter – February 2019

Dear Parents / Carers

Half term is approaching and what a full and varied spring term we have had so far. Bird week is currently running from Monday 11th to Friday 15th February with lots of activities being led by Tom. One teacher told me his class were enthralled and didn't want to stop counting the birds.

We had a successful residential to Mill on the Brue in Bruton Somerset and lots of group walks into the grounds now that we are beginning to see the first signs of Spring.

Parent Forum

I held three parent forums to discuss the proposed change of weekly hours. **Please visit the school website to read the response to points raised and to complete the online survey.**

PLEASE NOTE:

THERE IS NO CHANGE UNTIL JUNE 2019

Residential

I was lucky enough to visit the residential group on Thursday 7th February and join in with egg throwing, dinner and disco. There were a lot of tired children, but they had lots to tell me about their fantastic experiences. The accommodation was great, the food was delicious and the staff made us promise to go back next year. One lady said to me "your children could teach some of our other groups a thing or two about manners" which is nice to hear.

Thank you to all those staff who gave up their time to support this fantastic week.

Photos of SLT

The staff page of the school website now includes photos of the Senior Leadership Team.

www.millwater.devon.sch.uk/web/staff_list

Snow Day

Thank you for those of you who fed back to me after the snow closure, showing your understanding of how difficult it is for a school like ours to react. Although there was no snow to be seen at Mill Water, there was plenty in other places making it dangerous to travel for both staff and pupils.

The text message about school closing at 1pm meant that some families arranged childcare from then, when in fact not all taxis and buses were able to get in until later. Next time the message will be clearer depending on what I am told from DCC transport. I apologise for any inconvenience or worry caused. As always in these emergency situations, we made individual arrangements for families that needed it or who decided to collect their children themselves.

School Council

The school council are busy researching playground equipment for the next phase of our outdoor spaces. We are looking for thoughts and comments from families too. Any particular equipment that your child uses in play parks please let the school council know via hnewton@millwater.devon.sch.uk

We are planning a trip to ERADE to see their new installation of equipment hoping to be inspired.

PTFA

Thank you to the PTFA for the class contributions of £200. This enables staff to shop in charities and car boots making the money go as far as possible on resources. I look forward to seeing what the money has bought for the classes.



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Also, thank you to Beth, Class 2 parent, who baked the most amazing 4 tiered heart themed valentines cake, which was raffled at school amongst the staff, raising £88.00. Congratulations to Jess our School Nurse who had the winning ticket.

Disco

A message from the PTFA

A great time was had by 50 Mill Water parent/carers and pupils at our Friendship Disco. We danced, ate and danced a bit more!

Special thanks to our volunteers who made it all happen and to Charlotte, Mill Water TA who (fresh back from a school residential) gave up her time to create some wonderful glitter face art through her business Ineffable.

Look out for our next event, African Drumming on Sunday 3rd March (info to follow). And all very welcome at our next meeting at school - 945 on Tues 5 March. You can also contact us through our Facebook page or email

MillWaterPTFA@gmail.com

Future PTFA Events

African Drumming Workshop – 3rd March 2.30-4.00pm, Knowle Village Hall, Budleigh

Safeguarding messages from Lynne Hasell Designated Safeguarding Lead

Online Safety at home

We are aware that some of our pupils are playing games or using apps which contain disturbing content or which could leave them vulnerable to grooming. This whole area is a minefield for parents/carers and it is impossible to keep up to date with the latest sites. If you would value the opportunity to meet with other parents to discuss

your own experiences or if you can offer advice to others, please let me know as we would like to organise a get together in school. Please contact Lynne Hasell lhasell@millwater.devon.sch.uk if you are interested in taking part.

Bringing own devices to school

Many of our children are bringing iPads or other devices into school to use as part of their communication programme or to distract/entertain them on the journey to and from school. Where the iPad is being used for communication, the devices are generally not used by other members of the child's family. Sometimes, however, the device is used by other adults or children in the home. Where this is the case, please ensure that your child is unable to access any inappropriate material. We have put some helpful advice on setting up Apple devices safely on the school website. Please refer to this if you are unsure about Content and Privacy Restriction.

Play Event @ Playdome in Honiton

A parent of one of our pupils Jitka Jakubcova has been in contact with her daughter's former preschool teacher Danni Stapley. Danni has been in contact with Playdome in Honiton regarding an opening of which is solely for those with autism/additional needs. They were very helpful and have agreed to open 1 hour earlier this **Saturday 16th February 9 - 10 am**. For those who can't make this Saturday the next session will be on **Saturday 2nd March 9 - 10am**.

There is a maximum height limit at Playdome which is 4 foot 10 / 148cm. This is a chance for the children to play in a safe, secure location which also has a lovely large sensory room and a cafe! It also gives the parents/carers a chance to sit, have



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a coffee and be able to talk and ask questions with each other.

This will be starting off for 4 weeks on a trial basis with the sessions being once a fortnight and then Danni will advertise further dates on Facebook, please see the link on Mill Water School PTFA. Please note children will still need to be supervised during play especially in the sensory room. Any questions you have please feel free to ask Danni via the MWS PTFA page.

World Book Day – 07 March

You will have received a letter this week from Gemma Moore detailing the events.

Comic Relief – 15 March

More details on school activities for this event will be sent home soon.



Charity Dog Walk for Dogs Helping Kids

Monday 18th February
Meet: 10:00 am
Walk: 10:15 am
Orcombe Point,
Exmouth Seafront



Dates for your diary

What	When	Time	Where
February Half Term	Monday 18 th – Friday 22 nd February		
Charity Dog Walk	Monday 18 th February	10.00am	Orcombe Point, Exmouth
African Drumming Workshop	Sunday 3 rd March	2.30-4.00pm	Knowle Village Hall, Budleigh
PTFA Meeting	Tuesday 5 th March	9.45am	School
World Book Day	Thursday 7 th March	All day	School
Comic Relief	Friday 15 th March	All day	School
New Starters Open Morning	Friday 22 nd March	9.30am	School