

CONIFERS PRIMARY SCHOOL



5th October 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

I struggle to think where September went. It has been an exciting blur of new faces, new challenges, new initiatives, new staff and new parents. All of whom I would like to warmly welcome to the Conifers' community.

Our reception children have settled into Conifers extremely quickly and all others have taken to their new timetable and teachers very well indeed. Just a little reminder for you at home what that timetable includes; the teaching of Maths and English during the first two hours of the morning, all pupils participating in reading every day, cursive handwriting being taught across the school, a focus on teaching mental arithmetic skills, opportunities to practice extended writing skills every half term and whole school or Year group assemblies at the end of the day on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

As a school, Conifers strive to provide the best environment, best teaching and best learning opportunities for your children and your feedback around this is both welcomed and listened to. You can have a natter with me on the school gate each morning or at the end of the school day, or you can use our website. The feature for this is the 'Parent View' option, which can be found at the bottom of our Homepage. This link will navigate you to Ofsted's 'Parent View Homepage' where you are invited to comment on the school using the 'Give your views now' icon. Your views are important to us as a school, and we will use these to help us improve our provision. I would hasten to add that positive views are just as welcome as ones offering areas for development.

Talking of development, we have introduced a new reward system this term based around the use of Class Dojo. Being somewhat 'long in the tooth' you would probably get a better idea of what they are and how they work by talking to your children, who, hopefully, have already mentioned them to you, however, this much I do know. Children in the school will be rewarded with Dojo Points for everything they do that has a positive impact on themselves, their peers or the school. The Dojo will replace the House Points - but as a school, we are still keeping the Houses, more on that shortly. When a child has collected a certain number of Dojos, they can trade them in for a reward of their choosing. The children have helped us decide on what these rewards will be, but panic not, we have scrutinised some of them to ensure that as parents, do not suddenly become the proud owner of a Komodo Dragon! Children who constantly follow the school ethos and remain on their green cards (representing good behaviour and obviously full school attendance) all day, will also be awarded a Dojo on a daily basis. At the end of every half term, these children will be automatically rewarded with something like an extended break or lunch or the opportunity to 'come off' the timetable and watch a film with their peers to thank them.

So now back to the House System. Each half term, we will hold an event or 'House Day' where the children in each House - Dragon, Pegasus, Gryphon and Phoenix will compete against each other in various activities such



as sport, art, puzzle solving or, as in our first House Day, Bridge Building. Each House will choose the best bridge built by their team and 'pit it' against the other Houses. The bridges, (all of which will be built using the same materials) will be tested to see which one holds the most weight and will win the House Cup, which will be awarded for that half term.

I am extremely excited that our Year 6 children have already had the opportunity to experience some serious 'learning outside the classroom' this term. Our week-long residential to Dartmoor, staying at the River Dart Country Park, was an enormous success. I was lucky enough to be 'let out' for the week and joined everyone in caving, climbing, kayaking and balancing my way through the High Ropes course, to name but a few of the activities. As a school, this residential will now become part of our annual Year 6 calendar and we look forward to offering this magnificent opportunity for many years to come.

I would like to formally welcome four new members of staff to Conifers who have already started to make a very positive contribution to the children and the school. We have, in order of Year groups; Miss Curtis, Miss Blake, Miss Jones and Miss Samuel. As with all things in nature, there is always a balance to be found, so whilst welcoming new staff, we also have to say farewell to others. Mr Kirby, who worked with children in our Thrive base and on a 1:1 basis with children in the classroom, has left to focus on a career in social work and care. Whilst Mrs Burgess, our school receptionist, has 'hung up the phone' on her years of supporting you as parents, the children and the school staff, for a quieter life on a desert island somewhere in the Indian Ocean. Admittedly, that may just be wishful thinking, particularly as her time will now be spent helping her daughter, who is expecting her first baby in the new year. We wish them both and of course Mr Kirby, the very best with their future endeavours and thank them for their hard work and commitment to the school.

On the 'housekeeping' front, I hope you'll agree that the enhanced fencing height has certainly improved the safety of your children whilst on the premises and the restriction of Budmouth pupils walking through the school at the end of the day has decreased unnecessary footfall. The restriction on parking at the start and end of the school day has also improved safety and allowed a greater freedom of movement. If I could direct parents to the notice in this newsletter regarding general parking, we could, collectively, improve safety even further.

As always, thank you for your continued support.

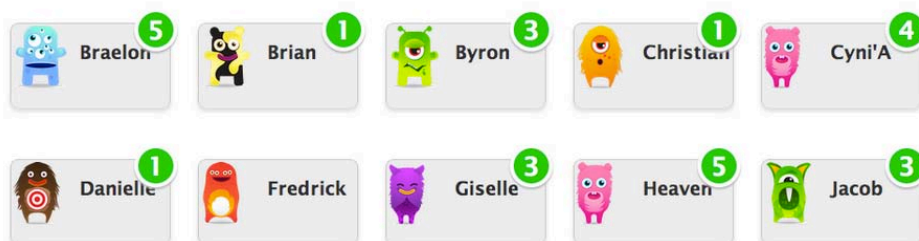
Yours sincerely

Mr A Johnson
HEADTEACHER





Since the beginning of term, all classes have been using Class Dojo to reward positive behaviour. Every class has their own Class Dojo and the children are rewarded individual points for excellent behaviour linked to the school LEARN Charter. The children have their own monster and they collect their own points. The children earn points individually, as a group or as a whole class and the points are awarded by the staff in the school.



The children keep adding to their points throughout the day and across the week. Once the children have reached different totals, they will have the option of trading their points in for a reward.

As a school, we are very excited to be using Class Dojo and we are looking forward to hearing the children talking about their points and sharing their totals with you at home.



Many thanks, Mrs Newport

PE and Sport at Conifers

We have the biggest and best selection of clubs available this term, so please make sure your child gets involved as many as possible!

Monday: Netball KS2, Dance Y3,4&5, KS1 Football

Tuesday: KS1 Multi-Sports, Film Club Y4&5

Wednesday: Basketball KS2

Thursday: Free running KS2

Friday: Football KS2

Letters are available from outside Miss Frampton's room or the office



Dartmoor - Year 6

The children and staff of Year 6 enjoyed our new residential at The River Dart Country Park where they were challenged both physically and mentally and pushed to new heights. Fun and laughter was had by all who attended as we enjoyed team building activities such as caving, kayaking, high ropes, raft building and climbing. The day started at 7am and ended at 10pm with very short breaks to wash their hands and get changed out of wet and dirty kit. The food and accommodation was fabulous and the setting for the trip was spectacular. This residential pushed us all to attempt things that we had never done before and resulted in us all feeling that we had accomplished bigger and better things. Children worked well individually and as teams to overcome many new obstacles and still carry the bruises to prove it! Year 6 children felt this was a huge success with quotes such as "the best trip we have ever been on." "It was amazing, wish we could do this again at the end of year 6." We look forward to running the residential again next year as it was a very successful trip.



PARKING



Last week has seen a near miss outside of the school involving a child. The child was struck by a car but was fortunately ok. There were cars all along the double yellow lines opposite the school junction, and then opposite the zig zags, (left side of the school) there was another car parked in the direction towards Fiveways. Please can I ask you to be extra vigilant and considerate whilst parking your car when picking your children up. The Governors of the school are giving this issue high priority and are monitoring the situation closely.

I know that you all agree that we must always take any health and safety concerns seriously and I am sure that you will help the Governors and myself ensure that there are no further near misses or worse an accident. CHILDRENS' SAFETY MUST COME FIRST.

There is currently a vacancy for a School Crossing Patrol on Chickerell Road for St Augustine's School, starting in January 2018. If anyone is interested please contact Rob Camp at County on 01305 224548. The hours would be 8.20-9.05am and 3.10 - 3.35pm, term time only.

SCHOOL DISCO

On Thursday 12th October, the Friends have organised an Autumn Disco for KS1 and KS2 children. The KS1 Disco will start at 3.30pm and finish at 4.30pm. The children will have a non-uniform day on this day and any child going to the 1st Disco will be taken there by their Classteacher. You will then need to collect your child from the School hall at 4.30pm. The KS2 Disco starts at 5pm and finishes at 6.15pm.

The Friends will be in the playground after school Friday 6th October, Monday 9th October and Wednesday 11th for you to pay and put your child's name down, thank you.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

We are holding our Harvest Assembly on Monday 16th October. This year we are donating food to the Weymouth Family Foodbank.

Please bring in:

Canned foods - soups, vegetables, beans, spaghetti etc

Dried foods - rice, pasta in sauce, noodles, soups etc

Packet foods - biscuits, cakes etc

(Please ensure all donations are in date and not past their sell-by-date).

We will be collecting canned and dried foods from Monday and would ask that donations go straight to your child's class teacher. There will be a free non- uniform day for the class that collects the most.

BAG2SCHOOL

You can bring in your donations in for Bag2School from 3pm on Wednesday 18th October until 9am on Thursday 19th October, thank you.

PARENT CONSULTATIONS

Don't forget to sign up for Parent Consultations which are taking place on Wednesday 18th and Thursday 19th October. Except for Mr Young and Miss Nokes classes who are taking place on Tuesday 17th and Thursday 19th of October. Letters can be obtained from the school office. This year there will be samples of hot food available for you to taste from our School Dinner provider and the 'Friends' will be selling teas and coffee.

FORMS

With this letter you will receive a contact form (to update your child's details, plus your email address) and a parental permission letter, re local visits, photo's in school, filming in school and ICT in school. Please, as a matter of urgency, can you fill them in and send them back into school with your child's name and class marked clearly on both of them.

School closes for half term on Friday 20th October and reopens for children on Monday 30th October.



