

CONIFERS PRIMARY SCHOOL



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HEADTEACHER
Mr A Johnson

29th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Unfortunately, 2021 has started without much of a fanfare – and instead of nattering with the children about what they got up to over their Christmas break and discussing any New Year Resolutions - the school remains a ghost of what it should be, and eagerly awaits a return to the hustle and bustle of everyday life. When that will be, is still a little uncertain, but in the interim, we will continue to support our most vulnerable children and those of Key Workers in the school whilst the majority of children will tackle the curriculum through their remote learning, and the use of Google Classroom.

Ofsted recently published a small article on ‘Remote Education’ and it is widely acknowledged that remote learning is neither a natural, or ideal scenario for children, staff or parents! However, as we have rolled from one lockdown to another and had the current one recently extended – it is one we have all had to adapt to and that will very likely remain in the educational landscape. Please be assured that we recognise the huge change both the children and yourselves have had to face and their rapid requirement for an increase in self-reliance, resilience and perseverance. In addition to this, children can, quite easily and quickly, ‘tune-out’ of learning time, without the structure of a school and classroom environment and the support they seek from their peers through questioning and cognitive exploration. You will already know this, most likely have witnessed and indeed suffered the accompanying frustration, but we will endeavour to ensure the children feel connected and as much a part of the school as they can, whilst away from it.

To achieve this, members of staff are posting a short welcome video at the beginning of each week, actively involving themselves in comments and feedback for the children and making phone contact each week to ‘physically’ talk to the children or yourselves. We have also started to take some tentative steps towards ‘live’ teaching sessions for either real-time demonstrations or as a ‘catch-up’ to ensure children are comfortable with what is being asked of them and to answer any questions or concerns in respect of their learning. These have been timetabled to occur at the same time and on the same day, in an attempt to both help your child remember the sessions and to aid your organisation of your working schedule, as I know you will be building these around supporting their learning. The school office is operational, so if you have any queries or concerns, please do phone and/or email and we will ensure you have the opportunity to speak with the most relevant person. Alternatively, you can use our safeguarding address for more personal concerns:

safeguarding@conifers.dorset.sch.uk and one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads will respond to you.

I know that I have stressed this before – but the most important thing for your children and yourselves, is emotional and mental well-being. We are obliged to provide quantities of work to keep your children engaged and actively learning, but in doing so, we would not wish it to become detrimental to your daily family life or general welfare.



I can see from the work returned on Google Classroom that the children are working hard – which by default, means you are working hard too, whilst maintaining your own careers or running households. With having to home-school two young daughters, I genuinely understand the additional levels of unwanted and uninvited stress – so thank you for all your support.

To end, we say a fond farewell to Miss Frampton who leaves us to continue her passion for teaching at another local school. During her time at Conifers she has taken the lead and extended opportunities for the children to participate in many sporting activities and leaves behind a legacy of sporting boys and girls. I'm sure she'll be greatly missed – but we wish her all the very best for her future career. We hope to have finalised arrangements for her successor by the beginning of next week and we will then arrange a virtual meeting to allow introductions to be made with them and the children of Beech class.

Thank you, and I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Mr A Johnson
HEADTEACHER

