

CONIFERS PRIMARY SCHOOL

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HEADTEACHER
Mr A Johnson

Dear Parents/Carers

UNCRC Article 28: Every child has the right to an education

It is a legal requirement that all children should attend their school and it is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure that their child/children attend school. Conifers Primary School, Bincombe Valley Primary School and Southill Primary School are committed to working together, to ensure that we have a consistent approach to school attendance. The group of schools have agreed the following:

- No leave of absence will be granted during term time.
- Whilst we understand that children do become ill on occasions, children who lose a lot of time at school can suffer in the long term from significant gaps in their learning. Schools have the right to request evidence of illness and will do so if a child builds up considerable absence through illness over a period of time. If a child's health continues to affect their education, schools are obliged to make a referral to the School Medical Officer to ensure that all that can be done, is being done.
- If your child is ill, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that they inform the school on the first day of absence. The school may then contact you to ask why your child is not in school and when they are expected to return.
- It is important that pupils are in school on time. Good punctuality is not only important in obtaining maximum benefit from education; it is also a key skill for adult life. Lateness is monitored by school and contributes to absence rates.

We are all committed to working positively with parents to support their legal responsibility for making sure children attend regularly and have systems in place to work with families when attendance drops below an acceptable level. This is explained in more detail in the attendance traffic light chart.

The individual schools will take action when a child's attendance fails to improve and continues to be below acceptable levels. This can sometimes mean schools working with the Dorset County Council's Partnerships and Prevention team. All schools hope that the formal processes that can be used to address poor absence will not be needed and that all children will have a good attendance record.

Where there is cause for concern about attendance, families will be contacted and attendance closely monitored for a 'Monitoring period'. If attendance has not improved sufficiently to at least 97%, you will be invited to an Attendance Panel. The panel is an opportunity for the



school, family and other agencies to meet together to discuss why a child has such high absence rates and to create an achievable plan to improve your child's attendance.

The panel can recommend several outcomes including a further period of close monitoring with specified targets for attendance, issuing a Penalty Notice Warning letter, a parenting order or seeking prosecution which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or custody. We hope that the Attendance Panel will not be needed and that all pupils will have a good record of attendance.

We aim to work together to give your child the opportunity to benefit from their time at school and for them to be happy and successful.

Kind regards

Mrs Donna Newport
Attendance Officer

