

Colnbrook C. of E. Primary School

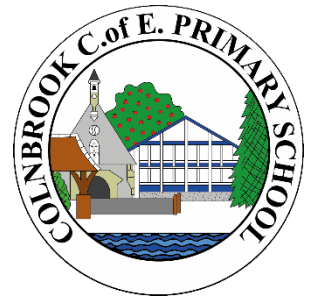
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Headteacher: Mr Tom Brunson B.A.(Hons), NPQH



Wednesday 17th January 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

We all want the best for our children and it is essential that we work together to ensure children have great attendance that allows every chance of success. ***Every moment really does matter in school.*** By ensuring great school attendance, children feel more secure, happy and confident in school and can make strong progress.

As a general rule, absence during term time is not permitted. Requesting a period of absence to visit unwell relatives, including those abroad, and extended time to attend celebrations are unlikely to be valid reasons for absence. Every year there are: *3 half term weeks, 2 weeks at Christmas, 2 weeks at Easter* and almost *7 weeks in the summer*. **School is open 38 weeks of the year, meaning there are 14 weeks of holiday time available to you to visit and celebrate with family and take a holiday.**

When we plan our term dates, we think carefully about how we can help families who want to take a holiday or visit relatives abroad; we know prices rise dramatically during holiday times (school staff have to pay those prices too!). Our term dates regularly include INSET days at the beginning or end of holidays that allow families to travel outside of the usual school holidays. This year, we have 4 of these days in July, meaning our school is finishing almost a week before many other local schools. Please use these times that the school is closed to go on holiday, or visit family.

Parents may request leave of absence for *exceptional* circumstances only. A form ***must be filled out in advance*** with as much detail as possible. Exceptional circumstances may include an urgent medical appointment, **one day** to attend a wedding or a funeral, or **one day** to celebrate a religious festival.

Permission for a request of leave of absence will only be considered where a child:

- a) Has good attendance (around 96% or above) at that time
- b) Is not likely to fall behind with their work and they will not miss important tests
- c) Has not requested any other leave of absence that year or in previous years (excluding annual religious festivals)
- d) There is an acceptable exceptional reason for the request

I would also request that all ***parents are up-front and honest*** about why children are not in school. On a small number of occasions, parents report their children to be ill, when they are away, or they do not inform us at all. The school does not provide false information about your child to you, and I would request that this respect is shown in return by all parents.

Working together in a supportive way is how we want to work with all of our families. However, you must be aware that fixed penalty notices (fines) may be issued if you remove your child from education during term time. Fines may be also be issued when the school or local authority suspect you are away, even if you don't tell us that you are.

If you have any questions, please do speak with me. I really appreciate your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Brunson', written over a white background.

Mr T. Brunson
Headteacher