

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL
COPTHORNE C E JUNIOR SCHOOL



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Dear Parent/Carer,

As Headteachers of the East Grinstead area schools, it is our moral imperative to ensure every child attends school regularly. We know that good attendance is key to success and long-term fulfilment: students with **over 96% attendance** are three times more likely to do well in their GCSEs and have better life chances.

To achieve this, we have created a shared plan based on the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance. We need your partnership to make this plan work.

1. **Fostering Belonging, Resilience and Support:** We will build strong relationships with your family. Our goal is to ensure your child feels safe, supported and challenged, making school a place they feel that they belong and are excited to attend.
2. **Monitoring and Recognition:** We will keep a close eye on attendance to spot issues quickly. We expect good attendance and will recognise this, reaching out to help those who are struggling early on.
3. **Quick and Supportive Contact:** If your child is absent, it is vital that you contact your child's school on the first day, following the school's Attendance Policy. This allows us to understand any barriers immediately and work with you to get your child back to school as quickly as possible. We will maintain contact with you throughout the absence.
4. **Collective Problem-Solving:** Our schools will work together to improve attendance in the area and liaise with one another where we have students from the same family. We will share trends, best practice, and resources, ensuring you receive consistent support. We focus on fixing the causes of non-attendance, not just the symptoms.
5. **Managing Term-Time Leave:** We will not authorise holidays or absences during term time as a rule. Any agreed absences will be truly exceptional and we will work with you to keep them as short as possible to support a quick return and keep continuity for students.
6. **Formal Support and Legal Action:** If attendance or potential educational neglect is a concern for any children in our schools, we will work with you and outside professionals, including the Local Authority and the Designated Schools Team. In line with government guidance, the Local Authority may issue formal warnings or Fixed Penalty Notices if attendance does not improve,

We believe this shared effort will strengthen our community and give all our young people the best chances of success and long-term happiness in their educational experiences.

Yours faithfully,

The Headteachers of the East Grinstead Area Schools