

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE – FROM THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER

Hello, my name is Clive Robins and I am the Education Welfare Officer working with Bratton Fleming School and Holywell C of E Primary School. The Education Welfare Service is available to support schools, families and children in maintaining regular attendance at school for all Devon pupils.

I monitor the attendance of pupils and make enquiries when the attendance of pupils falls below an acceptable level, usually anything less than 90%.

You might think that even 80% is a high figure to achieve, for instance in a test. In terms of school attendance however 80% attendance, when averaged out over a school year, means that the child has missed the equivalent of **ONE day a week!** Over the course of a child's time spent in primary school, **80% attendance would mean that the child had missed a whole school year of learning time!**

Most pupils attend school for at least 95% of the time with many achieving 100% attendance.

It is vitally important that children get into the habit of regular school attendance from an early age. At primary school level, it is usually the parent who decides whether or not the child should be in school and the law therefore holds parents accountable for their children's regular attendance. Parents can, and do, find themselves fined or in court if they fail to ensure their children attend school regularly.

If there are problems, other than genuine illness, preventing your child from attending school you should speak to the school as quickly as possible so that the problem can be resolved.

**Attendance of less than 90% is likely to affect your child's learning and development.** It could also have a negative effect on friendships and lead to them feeling isolated or 'different'.

OFSTED has said if that if a school's overall attendance (every child's attendance added together) is at the **national average of 95%** - the school can often only be judged as satisfactory! As we want to be known as a **GOOD and hopefully OUTSTANDING** school in the future, we need to get the school's overall attendance above **95%**.

As parents we all want the best for our children. We want them to do well in school so that they can have a secure future. Regular school attendance will help them achieve that by ensuring that they can benefit from the full range of education available to them, feel part of the school community and develop healthy relationships with other children and with adults.

If you do have problems or concerns about your child's school attendance and you would like my help, I can be contacted through the school, or on 01271 388548.