

THE DIAMOND LEARNING PARTNERSHIP TRUST

Established in the Queen's Jubilee Year 2012

Andrew Road, Eynesbury, St. Neots, Cambridgeshire PE19 2QE
Tel: 01480 375270 Fax: 01480 375274 CEO: Mrs S Connell

17th July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

This is a message about school attendance.

The Diamond Learning Partnership Trust is working in partnership with parents and the Local Authority to encourage children back into school in September following several very difficult months for parents and schools. We would like to thank parents for the work you have done in ensuring your children have received education during this period.

In March when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, the government made it clear that no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school. Schools were then closed to all but a specific group of pupils; those of key workers and vulnerable children.

Now the circumstances have changed, it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on their education, wellbeing and wider development. We know that children have missed being with their friends and the wider social aspects of school.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. The Government has therefore made school attendance compulsory again from the beginning of the autumn term.

This means from September 2020, the usual rules on school attendance apply, including:

- parents' duty to send their child to school regularly where they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability of local authorities to use legal sanctions.

If you are worried about your child attending school the first port of call is to discuss your concerns with your school directly. The school has specialist staff who may be able to help, and we work closely with health and the Local Authority teams who may also be able to help if needed.

In addition, this is not the time to take your child out of school for a family holiday or other term time leave. It is unlikely that any leave will be authorised by the Head

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Teacher after so much enforced absence from school. The more your child is in school, the more they will catch up.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members.

No Trust or Local Authority wants to take legal action, and every attempt to resolve parents' concerns and improve a child's attendance will be made before any formal action is considered.

After so much disruption to your child/ren's education over recent months, the most important thing is that the school and parents work together to get children back into school. The school is ready to listen so please contact them if you have any worries and they will try to help you.

Yours sincerely



Susannah Connell

CEO, the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust