

Barnes Farm Junior School

Henniker Gate, Chelmer Village,
Essex CM2 6QH

Head Teacher: Mr R McTaggart

Tel: 01245 467973

Fax: 01245 461947

E-mail : admin@barnesfarm-jun.essex.sch.uk

Website: www.barnesfarmjuniors.co.uk



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Dear Y6 Parents and Carers,

Over the years, I hope I have not hesitated to communicate to you when the school has been praised by members of the public because of the behaviour and attitude of its pupils. During last year's residential visit to the Isle of Wight there were numerous comments from members of the public on how well behaved and polite the children were. Your children were delightful when they visited Mersea for their trip in Y5, when relating to other school groups.

Therefore, it is with regret, that I write to you regarding a worrying series of incidents that have occurred outside of school and within our local community. These incidents have involved boys and girls from Y6, some wearing uniform, gathering after school around the park near to Asda.

Other park users (some with younger children) have complained about the general behaviour of the children there; rowdiness, bad language and pushing/shoving. Last night, there was an alleged assault of a Barnes Farm pupil which then led to threatening and intimidatory behaviour from other group members who were involved.

I feel very proud of my association with Barnes Farm Junior school and I hold its reputation in the community of utmost importance. So, it saddens me when I receive reports such as these from our local community. Regardless of whether the children are 'in uniform', I want the best for them inside and outside of school. I want them to be safe and to be responsible citizens. Therefore I reiterate the following guidance:

- The school has the power in certain circumstances (in accordance with our Behaviour for Learning policy and Education & Inspections Act 2006) to discipline pupils whose behaviour is unacceptable even if this occurs outside of school
- The school will use this power, particularly where the reputation of the school is being brought into disrepute. All levels of sanctions are available including exclusion.
- I will continue to advise members of the public to report crimes if they witness them being committed
- Parents are urged, if they have concerns about behaviour, to contact the school to involve us in addressing any issues
- Careful consideration and guidance needs to be given to our pupils regarding 'playing out', particularly when this involves 'groups'.

With the clocks going back over half term, I understand that this may naturally minimise any repeat of this week's events, but if this issue is not addressed it is likely to resurface repeatedly throughout the forthcoming year.

The overwhelming majority of our pupils are wonderful ambassadors for our school both within and beyond the school gates and we are very proud of the way in which they uphold their values.

Mr Ross McTaggart - Headteacher