

LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS DURING TERM TIME

Thank you to everybody who has supported us over our policy for no holidays in term time. I know that some parents have changed their holiday arrangements to keep to a minimum the amount of time that youngsters miss school; we appreciate your support. The Department for Education expects schools and local authorities to promote good attendance and reduce absences, including persistent absence. This is because we know that missing out on lessons leaves children/young people vulnerable to falling behind. Children/young people with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary schools.

The regulations on student leave of absence are now even tighter. From September 1st 2013 The Department for Education gave instructions that schools could no longer grant leave of absence during term time unless there are explicit exceptional circumstances.

The Department for Education have removed from the attendance regulations the ability of Head teachers to authorise up to 10 days absence and Ofsted will be closely monitoring school attendance and will be inspecting school registers as part of their ongoing drive to raise standards in all schools. As a school we work incredibly hard to support all children/young people and their families so as to ensure that all children/young people have good attendance.

If leave of absence is required for an exceptional reason, then please write to the school requesting permission at least four weeks in advance. In some circumstances, additional supporting information/evidence may be required.

Please note that requesting leave of absence does not mean that it will be authorised, as in most cases it will not be.

The following requests are not deemed to be exceptional circumstances:

- Cheap availability of holidays
- Large family/friendship groups
- Work commitments
- Excellent attendance and behaviour record
- Birthdays
- Time share agreements
- Holidays for family weddings or to see relatives

Please be aware that we will pass all unauthorised holidays taken in term time to the Education Welfare Service who will issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. If you take a holiday without notifying the school and we have enough evidence to suggest a holiday has been taken, the same actions will apply.

I would like to remind parents that this is Government policy and parents who take their children on holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absences for their child. These remain on the child's record and will be monitored for further action by the Education Welfare Service. Parents could be issued with a fixed penalty notice and/or court action.

Thank you for your continued support