



Requests for Leave of Absence

Dear Parents/Carers,

As a school we understand that that current financial climate has put pressure on family budgets with the cost of living going up and increases in prices. We therefore understand that there may be a desire to take family holidays during the school term, when they are considerably cheaper. We are seeing a steady increase in the number of families that are taking holidays in term time and we felt it was time to share with you again the legal standing on this. **The DfE states: 'Head teachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If a head teacher grants a leave request, it will be for the head teacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday as a norm.'**

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: (Pupil registration) (England) regulations state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances only and this is not the norm. It is important to note that Headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether absence is authorised at all.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable circumstances (which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time). There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is no legal entitlement for time off in school time to go on holiday and, in almost all cases, holiday will not be authorised.

Parents/Carers wishing to apply for a leave of absence need to fill in an application form (available from the school office) in advance and before making any travel arrangements. If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will automatically be unauthorised and if the number of sessions absent exceeds 10 consecutive sessions, the school may liaise with the Local Authority to consider issuing a fine or a warning letter.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and as such, we expect parents to help us by not arranging holidays during school time.

We have also noticed a marked increase in the number of early collections for reasons such as swimming lessons, dance lessons and similar. Please can we remind all parents that children should be in school until 3:30 unless a valid reason is given, such as an unavoidable medical appointment or it is for a school organised reason, such as a sporting fixture. Again, early pickup for any other reason than exceptional will be classed as an unauthorised absence.

As always, should you wish to discuss this or any other aspect of your child's education, please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher, Year Leader or a member of our Senior Leadership team.

Best wishes,

Simon France
Headteacher

What is your child missing out on?

| | | | | | |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| No Absence | 10 days absence | 12 days absence | 19 days absence | 29 days absence | 38 days absence |
| 100% | 95% | 94% | 90% | 85% | 80% |

| If your child misses | that equals... | which is... | over 13 years of school that's... |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 day a fortnight | 20 days per year | 4 weeks per year | Nearly 1.5 years |
| 1 day a week | 40 days per year | 8 weeks per year | Over 2.5 years |
| 2 days a week | 80 days per year | 16 weeks per year | Over 5 years |
| 3 days a week | 120 days per year | 24 weeks per year | Nearly 8 years |

