

## Holidays In Term Time Policy

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Date of Next Review: Spring 2018	Responsibility: School Improvement Committee
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### Aims

Actively promoting high attendance levels is a characteristic of an outstanding school. As a result of this belief, the school is reminding parents of the following guidance on holidays in term time.

The aim of this guidance is to minimise the amount of time lost to term time holidays in order to maximise the educational potential of every child. There are 175 days each year when your child is not in school. Absence for any reason during term time interrupts a child's education and disrupts educational progress.

This guidance is issued to assist you as parents in making the decision in regard applying for leave during term time.

### Regulations and Guidance

The law says that parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, the Headteacher has **discretionary power** to authorise up to a total of ten days absence in a school year for a family holiday if the circumstances warrant it. No parent can demand leave of absence for the purposes of a holiday as a right. The regulations do say that schools **may agree to authorise** up to ten days "holiday leave" in special circumstances such as;

- For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time if the holiday will have a minimal disruption to the pupil's education.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.
- A one off never to be repeated occasion that can only take place at the time requested.

Holidays which are taken for the following reasons **may not be authorised**;

- Availability of cheap holidays.
- Availability of the desired accommodation.
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods.
- Overlap with beginning or end of term or half term.

If the decision has been made not to authorise this absence, **this does not prevent** families from taking their children out of school for these days. However, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which can result in the involvement of the Educational Social Worker.

## **Requesting Absence**

Requests for holidays in term time must be made three weeks prior to the holiday and it is strongly advised that you do not book your holiday until approval has been given. A request must be made in writing on the holiday request form available from the school office. Parents/carers should **clearly explain the reason** for the request, where possible referring to the special circumstances outlined above. Written documentation may be required as evidence explaining the special circumstances as to why term time leave is being applied for. Your child's attendance and progress will be considered as part of this process. **Each application will be considered on an individual basis** and parents and carers will be notified in writing of the decision within ten school days of the date of application.

We will not authorise a request for holiday in term time if the following applies:

- When the pupil's attendance has been below 90% for the previous 20 weeks.
- The pupil already has unauthorised absence.
- If the period of leave requested coincides with statutory assessments.

If the holiday in term time is agreed it will be recorded as "H" on the school attendance register (authorised absence).

If the school does not agree to grant the leave for the holiday and parents/carers take their child on holiday, then this will be recorded as unauthorised absence "G" (family holiday not agreed).

## **Legal Implications**

Where a pupil is taken out of school for the purpose of a holiday in term time without the prior permission of the school, the parents/carers of the pupil may be issued with a £50 Penalty Notice per parent per child by the Local Authority (not the school). If the notice remains unpaid after 28 days, the penalty increases to £100. If the notice is not paid after 42 days the local authority will commence legal proceedings under section 444 (1) of the 1996 Education Act in the Magistrates Court.

Date Agreed by Governing Body: 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012