

## Holidays in Term Time Policy 2018

### Aims

The aim of this policy is to minimise the amount of time lost to term-time holidays in order to maximise the educational potential of every child. This can be achieved with the support of parents/carers by ensuring holidays in term time are not taken in school time unless there is exceptional circumstances. 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.

### Legal Context

The Department for Education requires Local Authorities to implement government amendments to the regulations regarding the taking of Leave of Absence in term-time, which came into force on the 1st September 2013. The law gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.

Headteachers are only be able to grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and this will still be at the discretion of the Headteacher. No parent/carer can demand leave of absence as of right.

The Education Regulations state that applications must be made in advance by a parent/carer with whom the child lives and can only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances.

### Requesting Leave of Absence for a Holiday

Each leave application is considered individually by the school taking into account any factors presented by the family. Leave of absence forms are available from the school office. School will also welcome early discussion with parents around potential applications.

The following are examples of the criteria for leave of absence, which may be considered as 'exceptional':

- Service personnel returning from active deployment.
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by written confirmation from the organisation/company.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.
- Where there is a significant, unpredictable event leading to the holiday having to be taken during term time.

The following situations **will not** be deemed as exceptional:

- Cheaper flights or other holiday expenses.
- Holiday at a time of the year 'because we've always gone in that week.'
- Birthday celebrations or similar.

Again, this list is not exhaustive.

### **How will a decision be made?**

The Headteacher will:

- examine the holiday request form to determine whether the request is based on exceptional circumstances.
- refer to the current and previous year's attendance – as a general rule, where either figure is below 95%, the request will be refused.
- consider whether holiday leave has already been taken within a rolling 12 month period.
- consider whether the child is likely to miss significant school based events, such as KS2 Tests week. (NB No holiday will be authorised during this week.)
- consider any other significant evidence

The Headteacher may also seek the advice from the Education Welfare Service. Where a Headteacher feels that there may be exceptional circumstances which does not fit the criteria, they may refer to the local authority for advice.

### **Refusal to grant holiday leave**

Where a child is taken out of school for the purpose of leave of absence in term time without the permission of the school, the absence will be coded as unauthorised and as such may result in a Penalty Notice.

### **Payment of Penalty Notices:**

Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notice. Payment of a Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Notice, increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice. If the Penalty Notice is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the LA must either prosecute under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or withdraw the notice. Where a penalty notice is withdrawn the recipient must be informed in writing.