

Headteacher: Jane Holt

14th March 2014

Dear Parents and Carers

Holiday Leave Entitlement

As you are all aware (from information published on the school's website/newsletters in July 2013), the Government introduced some significant changes to attendance regulations for pupils at school from 1st September 2013.

The most important of these is in relation to term-time family holidays. Below is a quotation directly from the Department for Education Circular:

*'Amendments to the 2006 regulations **remove** references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Head Teachers **may not grant any** leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances.'*

I draw your attention particularly to the second sentence of this paragraph. This interpretation will have different parameters from one case to another, and whilst it will be important to look at the whole situation in making decisions about any individual request, the normality will be that requests will be refused.

CRITERIA FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Examples of what might be considered as such are:

1. Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specified time in the year and there is no opportunity for a family holiday in school holidays. This must be supported by documentary evidence from the organisation.
2. Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
3. Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. Evidence must be provided, from qualified professionals, such as a doctor.
4. Where it may be a unique/last opportunity to spend time with a relative.

There is a new school attendance policy on the website in order to reflect this new legislation.

May I therefore ask that you respect these new regulations under which we must now work, and that if you do need to take your child out of school during term time, you make very clear in your request how the circumstances are exceptional. If this is not clear then under the new legislation, I will not be allowed to grant leave.

In addition to this new legislation there are also new regulations where the Local Authority will penalise parents and carers whose children are persistent absentees.

Yours faithfully,

Jane Holt
Head Teacher

