

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM-TIME

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

From September 1st 2013 new guidance issued by the Department for Education will apply to all absences in term-time.

An absence during term time, including family holidays is not a right. Any absence from school disrupts a child's learning. In addition, children returning from a term-time absence generally require additional time from teachers to catch up on the teaching they have missed.

This can have an impact on the education of other pupils in their class. Therefore, the Department for Education only allows Head teachers discretion to authorise an absence if they believe there are exceptional circumstances.

WHAT ARE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES?

These have not been specifically defined by the Department for Education; it is therefore the Head teacher's discretion that will determine this. Only a head teacher can make that decision based on the information provided to them by you, not the Local Education Authority or a parent.

WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES ARE NOT EXCEPTIONAL?

These include:-

- a) the availability of cheap holidays;
- b) an absence or holiday paid for, or booked, by someone else
- c) an overlap with beginning/end of term.
- d) a mix-up in term dates

(list not exhaustive)

HOW DO I REQUEST AN ABSENCE?

We will provide you with an absence request form which you should complete and return at least 14 days before the proposed absence.

The Head teacher will then make the decision whether the absence is considered to be an exceptional circumstance. If it is considered not to be an exceptional circumstance it will be unauthorised. If the absence has been authorised, because of exceptional circumstances, you must ensure you return on the date you have specified. The absence will then be recorded as an authorised absence and coded accordingly.

WHAT IF THE UNAUTHORISED HOLIDAY IS TAKEN?

The school may request the local authority to issue a Penalty Notice. This is a fine of £60 per parent for each child. If the fine is unpaid court action can follow.