



## Policy for the Leave of Absence in Term Time

We are obliged to inform all parents about major adjustments to the Education Regulations which have been passed to safeguard children's well-being and improve their academic progress. The Regulations which came into effect in September 2013 **do not** allow leave during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

- **The school may not grant any leave of absence during term time.**
- **Parents have no entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.**
- **Parents or carers cannot demand leave of absence as of right.**
- **If children are taken out of school without permission both parents may be fined and risk losing the child's place at the school.**

Unfortunately, reduced costs of holidays and family events do not constitute exceptional circumstances.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interests of the child to miss school for family emergencies. Being at school, friendship with peers and support from staff can provide children with stability. The routine of school offers a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

Any absence from school has a harmful effect on a child's academic progress and overall well-being. For example, if a child is taken out of school for two weeks, they will miss 50 lessons/ hours of learning. Other effects of absence would include children feeling excluded from their group of friends, not being able to understand new work and potential loss of self-confidence.

Legally and morally parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. If your child takes leave that has not been authorised by the school, it could lead to serious consequences such as:

- penalty fines
- legal action being taken
- your child losing their place at this school

The school is required to inform the Council's Children Missing Education Team if a child takes unauthorised leave. In such circumstances the Team and the school will commence an investigation into the unauthorised absence.

If you believe there is an exceptional and urgent reason for your child to take leave during term time, please discuss your reasons with myself, then make a written application and wait for written permission **before** booking leave. Parents must allow at least 14 days for decisions to be made. The school will then make the final decision on whether or not the leave is authorised.

Examples of reasons which may be considered as 'exceptional' are:

- death of parent/ carer or sibling of the pupil
- life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil
- service personnel returning from active service

We are very grateful for the support we receive from our parents and the teamwork that exists between the school and home. We are confident that on this issue of fulltime attendance we can work together to fulfil the potential of all our children.