



May 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians

LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

Some of you may be looking at rebooking holidays that have been cancelled because of Covid-19 and are considering taking time off during the term. Schools and parents/guardians have worked extremely hard over the last 12 months to maintain teaching and learning during lockdown and our priority for the rest of the summer term must be to keep children in schools and support them to re-engage fully with their learning. We are developing some exciting new learning experiences and creating innovative teaching ideas to help children get back on track but need children to be in the classroom to benefit from these opportunities. Following so much disruption, we now want to create a settling period to rebuild familiar daily structures, encourage friendships and support children that have had to deal with these exceptional circumstances. Time lost now to family holidays will create further disruption and I am concerned that there could be some misunderstanding of the law in relation to absence from school because of holidays taken during term time.

We advise that wherever possible, absence from school should be avoided as it can have a serious effect on your child's educational progress and can create difficulties for them on their return to school, particularly now after already having their school year interrupted by Covid-19. Children missing school for the purpose of family holidays would not be appropriate. It is important to note that only the Headteacher can authorise absence from school. Parents/guardians cannot authorise the absence themselves.

Schools are required to refuse requests for holiday absence in term time and headteachers may only grant a leave of absence in 'exceptional circumstances'. If you believe that your circumstances are exceptional you can make a request to the school. In considering a request, the school will take into account the child's age, the time of year of the absence, and the nature of the leave request. The Headteacher will also consider the child's stage of education and progress and will not authorise absence unless they believe your circumstances are truly exceptional.

Parents who take their children on an unauthorised holiday in term time could be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice. The amount of the fine is £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days.

Many people are working very hard to help your child to succeed. I trust you will support us in this matter, in partnership with your child's school.

Yours sincerely

Paul Stone
Trust Leader

