

## Leave of absence from school

Legislation no longer allows Headteacher to authorise any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The information below is designed to help parents understand how and when leave of absence in exceptional circumstances may be granted.

### Can we take family holidays during term-time?

Family holidays should be taken during school holidays. If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to accompany you on a family holiday during term-time, you should in the first instance, arrange an appointment with the Head Teacher. You should then complete an application form, at least three weeks in advance, stating the reason why the holidays must be taken in term-time. The Head Teacher has the right to refuse permission, having given consideration to:

- your child's age
- the time of year
- overall pattern of your child's attendance.

### What are exceptional circumstances?

Exceptional circumstances are one off events which are unavoidable, examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, respite care of a looked after child, a housing crisis which prevents attendance.

### I am thinking about sending my child on an extended trip overseas to visit relatives. What should I do?

The Government does not allow holidays in term time. Situations where a family is returning to visit relatives for a short period of time will be considered as a holiday. The school actively discourages families from taking trips during term time, as there are 13 weeks of school holiday where families may visit relatives abroad

This also applies to families returning late after the summer break. Parents are expected to ensure that children return to school from visiting relatives abroad in time for the first day of term. Failure to return on the first day may result in a fixed penalty notice.

Please be aware that an extended leave of absence is not always in your child's best interest. Children often find it difficult to settle back into school routines having been away for a long period of time and work that they miss out on while away cannot easily be caught up on.

**What else is not accepted?**

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sisters etc.

**What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?**

Make sure your child gets enough sleep, gets up in plenty of time each morning and has breakfast. Ensure he or she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child by your interest that you value their education.

**My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?**

Contact your child's Head Teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with schoolwork, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem.



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