

Dear Parent/Guardian

Holidays in Term Time (Guidance)

There is a common misconception that pupils are allowed to take 10 days holiday in term time per academic year. This is not true. Schools do have **discretion** to allow leave of absence of up to 10 school days if there are '**special circumstances**'. Only in '**exceptional circumstances**' can more than 10 days be granted. (*Department for Children, School and Families (DCSF) Keeping Pupil Registers June 2008*)

The DCSF has defined "**special circumstances**" where Schools may agree to grant up to 10 days holiday leave, such as:

- For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education; and
- When a family needs to spend more time together to support each other after a crisis.

School Governors wish to stress that any request for holiday absence will be considered very carefully. The following factors will be taken into account;

- whether the holiday application fulfils the 'special circumstances' criteria
- your child's overall attendance pattern
- how long the holiday will be
- the time of year your child will be absent and the likely disruption this may cause (for example, requests for leave at the start of the school year or when examinations are taking place are unlikely to be granted)
- previous similar requests (except in exceptional circumstances no second request will be granted in the same educational year)

The DCSF strongly advise schools NOT to authorise holidays for the following reasons:

- availability of cheap holidays;
- availability of the desired accommodation;
- poor weather experienced in school holiday periods; and
- overlap with beginning or end of term.

If you are unable to avoid requesting absence during school term, an application must be made to the Headteacher on an application form available from the school office. This should be **not less than six weeks** before that absence is due to start. This application can only be made by the parent/carer that the child normally resides with.

A response will be sent within 14 days of the receipt of the request. If your request is refused but you still take your child on holiday, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised and you may receive a 'Fixed Penalty Notice' for £50.00 from the Local Education Authority.

Please consider this matter very carefully before making a request for absence during term time.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher/Chair of Governors