



October 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Every day counts: why we do not authorise leave of absence during term time

Being in school is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing, and development. Evidence shows that students with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE and A Level results. Wherever possible, absence from school should be avoided as it can have a serious effect on your child's educational progress.

The legal position

- Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure their child gets a full time-education. Usually, that means going into school from the age of 5 to 16.
- Schools are required to refuse requests for holiday absence in term time. Headteachers may grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.
- 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.

What if my child needs to miss school?

Your child must attend every day that the school is open, unless:

- Your child is too ill to attend.
- You have asked in advance and been given permission by the school for your child to be absent on a specific day due to exceptional circumstances.
- Your child cannot go to school on a specific day because they are observing a religious event.
- Your local authority is responsible for arranging your child's transport to school and it's not available or has not been provided yet.
- Your child does not have a permanent address and you are required to travel for work. This exception only applies if your child attends their usual school or another school where you are staying as often as possible. This must be 200 half days or more a year if they are aged 6 or older

Parents should ensure that any planned absence is authorised. An unauthorised absence may result in a penalty notice or court summons.

Exceptional circumstances will only be granted if requested in advance by a parent or carer, for example a hospital appointment or the funeral of a close relative. A holiday during term time is not an exceptional circumstance.

COVID-19 guidance

As you will be aware COVID-19 continues to circulate in the community this autumn. Since March 2022 when the final Covid restrictions were lifted the UK Health and Security Agency (UKHSA) has advised that COVID-19 should be managed like other respiratory infections, such as flu.

COVID-19 presents a low risk to children and young people. This, combined with high vaccination rates in the population, means there are no longer specific rules relating to COVID-19 in schools, colleges, childcare and other education settings.

It is not recommended that children and young people are tested for COVID-19 unless directed to by a health professional.

Thank you for helping us to achieve high attendance and support our aim of providing an excellent education for all our students.

Yours sincerely,

Paula Smith
Acting Headteacher

Educating to empower