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Re: Holiday requests during term-time

Dear parents and carers

The last two years' of Covid have posed huge challenges for us all. A major concern, nationally, has been the loss of learning for children and young people and, along with all schools, we are working very hard to make up for this lost learning. In addition to this, the new expectation for schools' curriculum is that lessons follow a tightly planned sequence so that **all** lessons count.

As a school, we have worked hard to improve both our teaching and to remain open. This was really challenging last half term, when Covid cases amongst children and staff were at an all-time high, but we did it!

As the world is beginning to 'open up', we are having increased requests for holidays during term-time. **However, it is now even more important that children avoid having time out of school other than for illness.** Please note, as a result, we will be following closely the North Yorkshire guidance and protocols on granting exceptional circumstances for school absence, also taking into account the child's current attendance record. Further details of this guidance can be viewed on the school website but has also been attached to this letter – see below.

Thank you for your cooperation and ongoing support.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Beveridge

Headteacher

Application for leave during term time

An application for leave should be completed by the parent/carer and returned to the school as far in advance as possible and at least 6 weeks before the first date of the period of leave being requested. Parents/carers must obtain the schools permission before making any arrangements for leave in exceptional circumstances, otherwise the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. No parent/carer can demand leave of absence as of right.

The Education regulations state that applications for leave must be made in advance by a parent with whom the child lives and can only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances. Each application is considered individually by the school. The following are examples of the criteria for leave of absence, which may be considered as 'exceptional':

- Service personnel returning from active deployment.
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the production or confirmation from the organisation/company
- Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

This is not an exhaustive list and Headteachers must consider the individual circumstances of each case when making a decision on this matter. Where a Headteacher feels that there may be exceptional circumstances which do not fit the criteria, they may refer to the local authority for advice. The decision of the Headteacher is final. Where a child is taken out of school for the purpose of leave of absence in term time without the permission of the school, the absence will be coded as unauthorised and as such may result in a Penalty Notice. Penalties are applied by the Local Authority and as such are not at the discretion of the headteacher. If a Penalty Notice is not paid, the matter may be taken to prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Amendments to 2007 Penalty Notice regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1st September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices in line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecution if the fine is not paid.

Taking a pupil on leave during term time interrupts teaching and learning and can disrupt educational progress.

Before completing this application parent/carers are asked to consider the effect on their child's continuity of education.