

HAPP

HUNTS AREA PRIMARY PARTNERSHIP

ATTENDANCE

Dear Parents/Carers,

As Head teachers serving in local schools we felt it appropriate to write to you regarding the authorisation of Leave of Absence.

As you will be aware from correspondence from individual schools, we are all required to implement Cambridgeshire County Council's policy on Leave of Absence. The 2013 School Attendance Penalty Notice amendment means that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Authorised absences include sickness, medical appointments and other approved activities.

To help us achieve consistency of approach all cluster schools have agreed that their school policy will fully adhere to County Policy, which means that requests for leave of absence will only be approved in very exceptional circumstances. ***All schools expect attendance to be 100%, unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence, which would then be authorised.***

The fact that a holiday is cheaper in term time will not be considered to be an 'exceptional circumstance', nor will parents' working circumstances. No absences will be granted or authorised during SATs or exam periods. All requests should be made in writing to the Head teacher and will be considered on an individual basis but the most important factor is the effect an absence would have on your child's education. If we do agree to an absence in term time it is very important that your child comes back to school promptly.

We cannot prevent you from withdrawing your child from school, but if the absence is not authorised, it will be recorded as 'unauthorised' in the school register and you may be at risk of a Penalty Notice being issued. If we believe that the leave has been taken without any formal request to school we reserve the right to challenge this by writing to you and allowing 7 days for you to prove otherwise. Should we get no response this will be recorded as unauthorised leave of absence.

The school and Educational Welfare Service may issue a fixed penalty fine of £60 per parent per child if you make the decision to take your child out of school even though permission has not been granted.

If your child's attendance is less than 90% they are deemed to have 'Persistent Absence' and the Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice or consider legal action.

The school requires your child to attend regularly and we aim to support you to achieve this. If you have any issues with your child's school attendance we would encourage you to discuss this with your child's teacher, school support member of staff or the Head Teacher who can offer support to ensure good school attendance preventing the need for any Local Authority Attendance Officer intervention.

We hope you understand and appreciate our position and that you will support us by not requesting leave unless it is absolutely unavoidable and in line with the above criteria. We are looking to maintain the strong relationship that we have with parents and wish to work with you on this issue.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Hunts Area Primary Partnership Headteachers

Summer 2022