

Headlands Primary School Ralph Butterfield Primary School Wigginton Primary School

Friday 5th July 2013

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to you to inform you of some recent changes made by the Department for Education which will impact the way in which any requests for leave of absence for holidays in term time will be dealt with. These changes come into effect from September 2013 and apply nationally.

It is intended that this new guidance should further reduce the amount of time children lose to holidays in term time. Nationally 15% of all absence in primary schools is due to children being removed for holidays in term time, with the vast majority of this absence being authorised. In our school the percentage of absence through holiday was 27% for 2011/12 , which is **above** that national average.

The Department for Education has said that holidays should not be authorised on grounds of cost or availability of a particular holiday and this will not change. I would anticipate that there will be very few requests for leave of absence in term time that will be exceptional and therefore most requests for leave of absence will be declined and therefore marked as unauthorised. If any application for leave of absence through exceptional circumstances is made for Sept 13 onwards, attendance over the previous 12 months will be taken into account. Anyone with attendance below 90% (i.e. a pupil has had 3 weeks off school in the previous 12 months) will not be granted. Holiday prices and the fact that parents have booked a holiday before checking with school are not exceptional circumstances.

Parents do not have an automatic right for their children to have authorised absence to go on holiday. If parents take their child on an unauthorised holiday, the procedure is that the Local Authority will be informed and they will then contact the parents. In certain circumstances parents can be issued by the Local Authority with a Fixed Penalty Notice where they take a holiday in term time which is not authorised by the head teacher. A Fixed Penalty Notice can require a parent to pay a sum of either £60 or £120. Each parent can be issued with a notice for each child so two parents with two children can potentially be issued with four notices.

If you wish to talk about this matter with me please contact the school to make an appointment

Yours sincerely

Pat Boyle

Mrs S Wright
Headteacher
Headlands School

Mrs A Mitchell
Headteacher
Ralph Butterfield School

Mrs P Boyle
Headteacher
Wigginton School

HAXBY AND WIGGINTON SCHOOLS

Leave of Absence request form

Please read the reverse before completing this form

WHEREVER POSSIBLE PLEASE ENSURE THIS FORM IS SENT TO SCHOOL AT LEAST 2 WEEKS BEFORE THE LEAVE OF ABSENCE APPLIED FOR IS DUE TO START

Name of Child.....

Class.....

Address.....

Reason for application and proposed dates of leave requested (leave of absence won't be granted unless for exceptional circumstances and pupil's attendance in last 12 months is very good):

(please state **first** and **last** dates you propose that your child will be absent):

Begins.....**and ends**.....

Signature of parent/carer (applications can only be made by parents/carers)

..... **Date**.....

Office use only

Date received by office:..... No. absences in last 12 months.....

No. of illness: _____ No of holiday: _____ No. of other: _____

Total (including above dates applied for).....

Outcome/absence code:

Headteacher's signature.....Date.....

Reply letter: authorise / reject Date reply sent to parent:

APPLYING FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SEPTEMBER 2013

The process for considering requests for leave of absence during term time from September 2013 will be:

1. We will look at the child's attendance figure for last 12 months. **If the child's attendance is under 90% then requests for leave of absence will not be considered.**
2. If a parent cites work won't let them have other time off in school holidays, then a letter on headed notepaper from the parents' employer stipulating that they cannot have time off during school holiday time needs to be attached to the leave of absence request form.

Examples of where we would consider the request because of an exceptional circumstance s:

1. Attendance at a religious or civil ceremony or graduation involving a close relative/carer (Mother, Father, Grandfather, Grandmother, Sister, Brother, Aunt, Uncle, Cousin) and reasonable travel time.
2. Service families where a parent is on or returning from active duty.
3. the terminal illness/ bereavement of a close family member
 1. A day for moving house;
 2. A day for visiting another school if a child is moving schools
 3. Family emergencies until arrangements for child to attend school can be made;
 4. Representing city, county or country at a national or international level in sport, music or the arts where selected to do so by a recognised authority, including reasonable travel time.

We wouldn't authorise holiday for the following reasons:

1. Shopping trips;
2. Theatre visits;
3. Participating in or travel time to 'open entry' sport, music or arts events i.e. those not involving selection by an external body;
4. Days off to meet visiting relatives.
5. Cheaper holidays
6. Family celebrations
7. It's the child's birthday

What happened if a pupil goes on holiday when it has not been authorised

- Parents do not have an automatic right for their children to have authorised absence to go on holiday.
- If parents take their child on an unauthorised holiday, the procedure is that the Local Authority will be informed and they will then contact the parents by letter.
- In certain circumstances, such as a repeated going on unauthorised holiday, parents can be issued by the Local Authority with a Fixed Penalty Notice where they take a holiday in term time which is not authorised by the head teacher. A Fixed Penalty Notice can require a parent to pay a sum of either £60 or £120. Each parent can be issued with a notice for each child, so two parents with two children can potentially be issued with four notices.