



Great Bardfield Primary School

Changes to the Application of Absence Leave during Term Time

New regulations - September 2013

From September 1st 2013, the Department for Education has made amendments to the regulations which previously allowed Headteachers the discretion to grant holidays taken during term time.

The current law **does not give parents any entitlement** to take their children out of school for a holiday or extended leave during term time.

This means that the new changes make it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Schools are required to follow and operate within the new Government regulations.

Any application for leave must only be in 'exceptional' circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are '**exceptional**' and warrant the granting of leave of absence. **Low cost travel, birthday treats, theatre visits or arrangements made by a family member or friends are not deemed to be exceptional circumstances.**

In 'exceptional' circumstances, a request for absence must be made in advance, a minimum of 2 weeks before the absence, to the Headteacher, who will inform you of the decision.

As a result of this legislation, Headteachers are not expected to deem any term time holiday as 'exceptional' and therefore any decision to grant leave will be made using the following criteria:

- The individual circumstances as to why the holiday is being requested in term time
- The child's attendance record and percentage of absences
- The age of the child and the time of year proposed for the holiday
- The child's attainment and progress

Any request for leave during the first 2 weeks in September, will not be authorised as this is an important time in a child's education when they are settling into a new school/class. Similarly, leave will not be authorised 2 weeks before or after the Christmas or Easter holiday, as well as before and after any half term holiday. No leave will be granted for Year 6 pupils during the 2 weeks before SAT's and during the week of SAT's in May, nor for Year 2 pupils during May when assessments are taking place.

Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to your child's educational progress. A child who takes 10 days absence will only attain 94.7% attendance in the year. 10 days absence also means the pupil will miss 50 hours of education.

If a request for leave is not authorised by the Headteacher and the pupil goes on holiday, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, which then stays on a child's record.

For information, if the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken, the case could be referred to the Education Welfare Service who may issue a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

*Unfortunately, due to the new regulations, any holiday requests already made for the 2013/2014 academic year, will no longer be authorised.



Great Bardfield Primary School
Application for Exceptional Leave of Absence during Term Time

I have read the guidance information, however, still wish to make an application for leave of absence from school.

Name of child.....Class

Name of child.....Class

Name of child.....Class

First day of absence.....Last day of absence

Total numbers of days requested.....

Please use the space below to explain and *outline* **the 'exceptional circumstances'** for which a leave of absence is being applied for.

Signed parents/carers.....Date

Following the application, you will receive a copy of this form which will show whether the absence will be recorded as authorised or unauthorised.

For school use only

Authorised Not authorised

Explanation

Signed.....Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher

Date