

**Holidays in school time maybe less expensive....
But your child's education is priceless!**

In summary

- ❖ **No term time holiday/ long weekend/ day trips will be authorised (unless for exceptional circumstances)**
- ❖ **A form must be completed to indicate dates of absence (which will be recorded as unauthorised unless indicated by Headteacher)**



**Family Holidays
during term-time
and extended
visits overseas**

**Pearl Hyde Community
Primary School**
January 2019

Information for Parents/Carers

Children of school-age who are registered at a school must, by law, attend that school regularly. Regular attendance is important, not just because the law requires it but because it is the best way of ensuring children make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. When a child is absent from school he or she misses not only the teaching provided on the days when absent, but is also less prepared for the lessons building on that when returning. There is a consequent risk of underachievement which head teachers and parents will both wish to avoid. There may be occasions when a child has to miss school - for example, if unwell. Any other absences should be kept to an absolute minimum. **In particular**, parents should avoid taking children out of school during term-time in order to go on holiday or for long weekend break.

What the Law says

The regulations make it clear that parents **do not** have any right or entitlement to take a child out of school for the purposes of a term-time holiday. The regulations do state that head teachers may, in **exceptional circumstances**, grant a period of leave of up to **10 (ten) school days** in any one school year but parents should not expect such leave to be granted as a right. Indeed, it is likely that in most cases head teachers will refuse to authorise absence. A significant number of schools are adopting a similar position.

Taking a holiday without permission from the headteacher could result in the issue of a Penalty notice that could lead to a fine of £60 per parent.

The Government's own guidance on the issue of term-time holidays states: *'Parents should not normally take pupils on holiday in term'*.

How we deal with requests for term-time holidays

As a school we strongly discourage parents from arranging leave of absence or family holidays during term-time and will, as a rule, state that leave for term-time holidays will not be authorised unless there are **exceptional circumstances** which might justify it. Permission for leave still needs to be sought from the Headteacher. If you are taking your child on an annual holiday or leave the procedure is:

1. Complete a **form** available from the office indicating the dates and reasons for the absence from school.
2. A decision from school regarding permission and authorisation will be made.
3. If a parent/ carer wish to present exceptional circumstances a formal
4. interview will be held with the Headteacher. A decision will be made by the panel and the parent (s) notified within seven days

Coventry Education Authority does not support holidays in school time. There are 190 statutory days in one school year; this leaves 175 days every year out of school time available for holidays every year!

What are "exceptional circumstances"?

It is the decision of the Headteacher as to what might constitute exceptional circumstances and each request for term-time absence will be considered on an individual basis. A Headteacher will not accept as an exceptional circumstance the fact that a holiday is cheaper during term-time. An exceptional circumstance is much more likely to be a one-off, unique situation e.g. there may have been a significant trauma in the family recently and the Headteacher might consider that an immediate holiday might enable the child concerned to better deal with the situation; In such circumstance the parent/carer will meet with the Headteacher who will authorise attendance if that decision is made.

Issues parents need to be aware of

Unauthorised absence (or persistent lateness) can lead to a Penalty Notice being served. A leaflet detailing this further can be obtained from the Office. Should a school not agree to grant leave (e.g. due to low attendance below 95%) and parents take their child on holiday in spite of this then a penalty notice could be enforced resulting in a £60 fine for each parent. This will still be counted as unauthorised absence and will also be without permission. Please note that it is school policy **not to supply work** if a child is on holiday. By taking your child out of school, you negate your right for the school to provide work.

Feigning Illness

It is important to note that the school will regularly check the registers for patterns. The school may also have concerns that a parent has taken a child on holiday and reported them as ill. With the support of the Education Welfare Officer, several visits may be made the child's residency to ascertain whether the child is ill. Obviously if the house is unoccupied then suspicions will arise. If it is felt that the child is not ill and has indeed been taken on holiday, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Never underestimate the honesty of a child!

If a child is absent from school for longer than four weeks without a reason the school may decide to take the child off the school roll. If your child's name is removed from the school roll you must be aware that you may not be able to get a place, for your child, in the same school, on your return.

Reminder If you want to take your child/children out of school you must complete a form from school indicating the reasons for the absence.

Further information

www.dcsf.gov.uk/schoolattendance

NB - Throughout this leaflet reference to parent(s) should be understood to include carer(s).