



RICHARD WAKEFIELD C.E. PRIMARY ACADEMY



Guidance Notes for Parents/Carers requesting Leave of Absence in Term Time

These notes have been produced using guidance issued by Staffordshire County Council

1. Parents/carers who would like the School to consider granting leave of absence in term time should read these notes carefully, complete the Request for Leave of Absence form and send it to the Headteacher. The form must be received by the school in time for a request to be considered well before the desired period of absence. Parents/carers are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the School's decision regarding their request. The Headteacher cannot authorise any leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins.
2. The Department for Education makes it clear that the Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers now also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.
3. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time.
4. The school, along with Staffordshire County Council understands the challenges that some parents/carers face when booking family holidays, particularly during school holiday periods. However, we believe that in order to ensure children receive the best education to enhance their prospects, they should be in school during term time.
5. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. In considering a request, the school will take account of: -
 - the **exceptional** circumstances stated that have given rise to the request
 - the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements
 - the overall attendance pattern of the child
 - frequency of similar requests
 - whether the parent/carer made the request in advance
 - pupils on examination courses or due to take SATs will **not** be granted leave of absence.
6. Where parents/carers have children in more than one school, a separate request must be made to each school. The Headteacher of each school will make their own decision based on the factors relating to the child at their school, however Headteachers may choose to liaise with each other as part of their decision-making process.

7. Should the school decide to grant leave of absence but the child **does not return to school at the time she/he was expected to** (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave of absence period) and no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
8. **Should the school decide not to grant leave of absence and parents/carers still take their child out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, which may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine of £60 per parent* per child.** This fine will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the £120 fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to Court proceedings.
9. **Parents/carers who do not to apply for leave of absence but still take their children on holiday during term time can expect the absence to be recoded as unauthorised, which may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine of £60 per parent* per child.** This fine will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the £120 fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to Court proceedings.
10. The Local Authority will continue to monitor all school absences during term time and support Headteachers in challenging parents/carers who ignore the law.

* Generally the DfE states that parents include all those with day to day responsibility for a child.