



HOLIDAY ABSENCE & PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM

I would like to remind all parents that the current law does not give entitlement to parents to take their child out of school during term time.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 does not allow Headteachers to grant leave of absence to a pupil unless the Headteacher considers that there are 'exceptional circumstances' relating to the application.

If a holiday is not authorised, and is taken without permission covering more than five days, the Education Welfare Service may issue a penalty notice to each parent, requiring them to pay a fine of £60.00 for each child to be paid within 21 days. If the penalty is not paid within the time scale the penalty will increase to £120.00. If the higher penalty is not paid within 28 days, the Education Welfare Service will then institute legal proceedings against you in the magistrate's court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure your child attends school regularly.

I also need to make you aware that the percentage for persistent absentees has now increased to 90%. This now means that if your child's attendance falls below 90% the Education Welfare Officer will begin to monitor your child's attendance. Absence rates of between 91-95% are categorised by Essex LA as 'cause for concern', with 87-90% as 'unsatisfactory'.

We have had a little 'flurry' of holiday requests before the summer holidays and leading into this new academic year and I do want to make sure that everyone realises that unless there are exceptional circumstances all 'holidays' have to be 'unauthorised'. Thank you to all those parents who have completed holiday forms rather than called in as 'sick'. It is much better to be totally honest as otherwise children have to pretend they haven't been away. I also need to remind you that late arrival at school between 9 and 9.15am will be registered with a 'late mark', however any later than 9.15am and your child will receive an 'unauthorised' absence.

Amanda Mitchelson, Headteacher.

Updated from original 2016 version for Sept 2017