



ST MARY'S
CHURCH OF ENGLAND (Aided) PRIMARY SCHOOL
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Executive Headteacher

Ms Helen Comfort

18th July 2017

Dear Parent/Carers,

Unauthorised Absence During Term Time

In September 2013 the Department for Education amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Headteacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for a holiday. The Regulations only allow Headteachers to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances." An "exceptional circumstance" would have to be defined as an unavoidable cause e.g. a one-off emergency situation which prevents the child from attending school.

I am writing to inform you that, with effect from the beginning of next academic year, holiday during term time will not be authorised.

I realise that some of you may feel this is a different approach to previously, however, I am following the school Attendance Policy which has been in place for some years. Please see relevant paragraph from policy below and/or look at the full policy on the school website.

Leave of absence/holiday

- *Leave of absence during term time is authorised, or not, by the Headteacher. It is the decision of the Senior Leadership Team and the Governors that holiday leave will not be authorised for pupils unless there are very exceptional circumstances.*
- *Any absence, including holidays taken without the school's permission, will mean absence is unauthorised (truancy). The deliberate taking of a holiday in term time without/against school permission (where it can be clearly demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not/would not be given) and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence in the current term of at least 10 sessions/5 school days, may incur a penalty notice.*

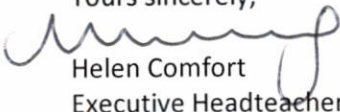
There will no longer be an 'Application for Pupil Leave of Absence from School' form held in the school office.

You must continue to inform the school if your child is absent from school – even if you take them away on holiday during term time. Please be honest with us; do not pretend that your child is ill when they are not, do not ask your child to be dishonest with us either. A telephone call or letter will suffice.

I have discussed this matter with the school Governors and they are in support of the school Attendance Policy being followed. We understand the importance of children being at school every day, unless they are unwell. Absence from school impacts on a child's learning; every school day counts. Please see attached illustration for reference.

I thank you in advance for your support with this important matter.

Yours sincerely,


Helen Comfort
Executive Headteacher

Every School Day Counts

190 School days → Opportunities for learning			
	Attendance %	Missing days from School	What this means
365 DAYS IN EACH YEAR	100%	Zero days absent	Excellent! A child can take advantage of all learning opportunities!
	99%	1 Day	Very good! This will help all aspects of your child's progress and life in school. A child should reach his/her full potential, leading to the best possible start to their formal education.
	98%	3 days	
	97%	5 days – a school week	
Equals to	96%	6 to 7 days absent	Good! A child has a good start to their schooling and can make the most of all opportunities to do their best.
	95%	8 to 9 days absent	Satisfactory! A child is likely to achieve their targets, however they should strive to build on this.
190 DAYS AT SCHOOL	94%	10 to 11 days absent (two school weeks)	Below the average attendance nationally. If a child has more than two weeks away from school they may fail to make the progress expected.
	93%	12 to 13 days absent	
&	92%	14 to 15 days absent (three school weeks)	Poor attendance! Absence is now affecting attainment and progress at school. Parents will need to work with the school to improve the situation. Below 90% attendance is considered persistent absenteeism and the Local Authority may become involved to take action.
	Below 90%	20 days absent (four school weeks)	
175 NON SCHOOL DAYS	86%	25 days absent (five school weeks)	
	Below 82%	33 days absent (a half term)	Unacceptable! A child will now be finding it extremely difficult to keep up and achieve their best. This level of absence is not fair on the child. The Local Authority may take action against the parent/carers.
	78%	40 days absent	Children with this level of absence are missing a day for every week in school. Absence is causing SERIOUS CONCERN . It is seriously affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting the child's learning. Could lead to Court Action or Penalty Notice.

175 Non School days → 175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and appointments.