

Dear Parents

Absence from Learning

The Department for Education have informed schools that amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that from 2013 headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.



Headteachers have agreed that the following may be authorised at their discretion:

- An organized educational course (including visits to other schools).
- An organized exam, sports competition or approved public performance provided the production company has the appropriate licence.
- Medical and/or Dental appointments. (However, please makes medical and dental appointments outside of the school day whenever possible)
- Illness, sickness and treatments - although frequent medical absences may be challenged.
- Funerals (one day only) and bereavement
- Weddings (one day only). Absence for wedding anniversaries or travel to weddings cannot be authorised)
- Days of religious observance.

Headteachers will not authorise absence for:

- Shopping trips, birthdays treats, days out or to visit relatives
- Extra days tagged onto weekends throughout the year.
- Days when a child could have come in late rather than not at all.
- Holidays – unless there are “exceptional circumstances”

Schools are unable to grant leave of absence (e.g. holidays) during term time unless there are “exceptional circumstances”. Headteachers have agreed that the following may be considered as “exceptional circumstances”:

- a) Children with a parent on leave from the armed forces
- b) Holiday for recently adopted children or children in care
- c) Holiday for parents who work in the emergency services and who have had their leave cancelled (recent examples include leave cancelled because of fracking protests and the Queen’s Jubilee)

The following will NOT normally be deemed as “exceptional circumstances”:

- a) Financial circumstances or reasons
- b) Shift work (including that for the emergency services and NHS) or work commitments
- c) Tours or trips with performing arts groups and sports clubs
- d) Non-school based sports training or tournaments.

If you decide to allow your child to be absent without authorisation this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and a fixed penalty notice of £60 per parent per child may be issued by the Local Authority.

If a child is not at school we cannot teach them. Children who miss lessons are finding it harder and harder to catch up as the curriculum is become more and more demanding. We want every child to do their best; this coupled with a change in the law, means that we can only authorise absence very rarely. We hope you understand the importance of good attendance and give your child every opportunity to attend school and enjoy their education.

Yours sincerely,

Louise Swann Buckingham Park Primary School, **Julia Sherlock** Eastbrook Primary Academy, **Jo Kelly** Glebe Primary School, **Trish Stepney** Herons Dale Special School, **Rebecca Jackson** Holmbush Primary School, **Martin Sacree** Shoreham Academy, **Bob Woodman** Shoreham Beach Primary, **Andy Lincoln** St Nicolas & St Mary Primary School, **Kate Crees** St Peter’s Catholic Primary School, **Lawrence Caughlin** Swiss Gardens Primary School