



September 2008

Dear Parents

Re: Holidays in Term Time and Unauthorised Absence

There is increasing pressures on schools to follow procedures laid down by the Department of Education and Skills who expect us to actively discourage all holidays in term time. Please read this letter which clarifies the current situation. Due to the guidelines that we are being instructed to follow it does mean that holidays that have been previously authorised may no longer be.

There is a common misconception that any pupil is allowed to take 10 days holiday per academic year in term time. This is not true. In certain circumstances the parent or parent(s) with whom a pupil normally resides can request leave of absence of up to 10 school days for an annual family holiday, and this may be authorised by the school. Holidays which are taken for the following reasons cannot be authorised:

- Availability of cheap holidays
- Availability of desired accommodation
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods
- Overlapping with the beginning or end of term.

Only in exceptional circumstances can any more than 10 days be granted.

In order to assess the potential impact on a pupil's education of any proposed term time holiday, Warwickshire schools are asked to use the Warwickshire Holiday Calculator (a copy of which is available from school). This also ensures consistency of practice across all our schools. The calculator takes into account:

- The pupils current absence record
- The number of previous similar requests
- The Year Group the pupil is in
- Proximity to major tests/exams

Should a pupil's education be deemed likely to suffer unduly as a result of leave of absence, authorisation cannot be given by the Head Teacher.

If you are unable to avoid requesting absence during school term, an application must be made to the Headteacher on an application form (see attached). This should be not less than six weeks before the absence is due to start. Please note that if you have already completed a form in advance of a planned holiday for this year from October onwards, then a new form will need to be completed.

A response will be sent to you within 14 days of receipt of your request. If your request is refused, but the child will still be absent from school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences are monitored by the Local Authority.

Please consider that unauthorised absence may be damaging to your child's education and can reflect badly on the school. Please consider this matter carefully before making a request for absence during term time.

Yours sincerely

Ben Wilde
Headteacher