



1 July 2015

Dear Parent/Carer,

Term Time Holidays & Leave of Absence

I am writing to advise you of a change in the school's policy in relation to holidays in term time and other leave of absence. These changes reflect recent changes in the law and the guidance to schools published by the government, and are in line with the advice and policies promoted by the Local Authority across all the schools in Stockport.

After illness, the taking of holidays in term time has been in recent years the single largest cause of absence from schools in England. At Norris Bank Primary School, we believe that holidays in term time are undesirable because of the impact on our pupils' education, and we strongly encourage parents always to take family holidays during the 13 weeks of school holidays which are available to families each year. Research has shown that there is clear link between levels of attendance and levels of achievement. In short, the more time a pupil misses school, the lower their levels of achievement are likely to be. Taking holidays in term time has a disruptive effect upon pupils' learning and it is often difficult for pupils to catch up with work that has been missed. It may also suggest to pupils that their education is not an important priority.

Please take the time to read the information below so that you are aware of the changes and how you may be affected.



Changes in the law

With effect from 1st September 2013 the law concerning term time holidays and leave of absence has changed. Previously schools were allowed to authorise pupils to miss up to 10 days' school a year for the purpose of family holidays if they felt there were special circumstances which justified it. This right has now been abolished. Schools are now only allowed to authorise leave of absence from school for any reason if they are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances.

The effect of this change means that it is now very unlikely that permission for pupils for leave of absence for holidays or other purposes will be granted. Schools may also require evidence to be provided before agreeing to authorise any exceptional leave of absence.

Education Penalty Notices

At Governing Body meetings of all primary schools and our local high school held during the Autumn and Spring terms, term attendance and leave of absence was discussed. All governing bodies agreed to the issuing of Education Penalty Notices by the Local Authority if holidays or other leave of absence are taken during term time without permission.

Education Penalty Notices are fixed penalty fines of £60 (rising to £120 if unpaid within 21 days) per parent per child by the Local Authority.

Parents should be aware that this policy will apply at Norris Bank Primary School with effect from Monday 1st September 2014.

Requests for Leave of Absence

As mentioned above, parents are strongly requested to take holidays during the school holidays. If you wish to request Leave of Absence for any reason we would ask you to do so by completing a Leave of Absence request form at least four weeks before the start of the proposed leave.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Natalie Evans

Acting Headteacher, Norris Bank Primary School