



Dear Parent/Carer,

All schools **by law** must follow the Department for Education's statutory guidance relating to school attendance. They must use the appropriate national attendance or absence code, and follow the criteria set out within the guidance. The statutory guidance states:

- A leave of absence **must not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances and must be requested in advance.**
- A leave of absence must be requested **in advance** by a parent who the pupil normally lives with
- Schools must judge **each application individually**, considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request.
- Where a leave of absence is granted, **the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.**
- **A need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.**
- A school **cannot** grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, the leave of absence should not be granted.
- Where this guidance refers to a parent, the school and/or local authority will need to decide which adult(s) is most appropriate. Generally, parents include:
 - All natural parents, whether they are married or not.
 - All those who have parental responsibility.
 - Those who have day to day responsibility for the child.

Please note all schools are expected to regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence.

Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to their educational progress. If the absence is not authorised and the leave is taken, schools may refer to the Local Authority for legal action. Please find attached information regarding Helping Parents understand Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance.