



Westfield Primary School
Clayton Crescent
Runcorn
WA7 4TR

Telephone: 01928 572343
Fax: 01928 565099
Email: head.westfield@halton-borough.gov.uk

Headteacher:

Mrs. C. Dawes BEd (Hons), BSc, NPQH

At the heart of everything we do is the welfare of your child

HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

It has been brought to my attention that the issue of holidays in term times is causing some difficulties for parents and so I wish to clarify the position.

The legal position is that any holiday during term time must be approved by the Headteacher in order to be authorised. The law does not allow for a parent to take a child on holiday during term time but enables a Headteacher, if deemed appropriate, to authorise such a holiday in certain circumstances. The circumstances where a holiday may be authorised are set out in the documentation provided for parents.

Special and exceptional circumstances

The Head Teacher may consider that the following circumstances are “special” or “exceptional”.

- Allow a pupil to return to their country of origin for family, religious or cultural reasons.
- Unavoidable circumstances e.g. the parent/carer has inflexible leave allocation and this has been confirmed by the employer.
- A family member is seriously ill.
- There has been a death or significant trauma in the family and a holiday may help the child to cope better with the situation.

However the following would not be considered as special or exceptional circumstances

- Availability of cheap holidays.
- Availability of desired accommodation.
- The prospect of better weather.

The school operates a holiday request process whereby the parent must complete the request form to obtain the permission of the Headteacher prior to taking the child on holiday. I would ask that the request form be submitted prior to the holiday being booked or at least **6 weeks** before the holiday to allow sufficient time for the school to respond. Completion of the form does not guarantee that the holiday will be authorised. If this process is not followed and the school becomes aware that a holiday has been taken then any absence will be marked as unauthorised.

- The Local Authority collects attendance information and will use the full range of sanctions where holidays are taken without the permission of the school. Currently the fixed penalty is £50 per parent per child for any unauthorised holiday, which increases should it not be paid within a certain period.

This is unless evidence is produced that the time taken was for other exceptional circumstances e.g family bereavement or sickness. It may be that due to the unauthorised absence a referral is made to the Local Authority for further action.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C Dawes
Headteacher

