

24th February 2017

Dear Parents / Carers,

A warm welcome back to you all after the Half Term holiday. I hope you were able to rest and enjoyed spending time together in the warmer weather.

I returned to school to a large number of absence and holiday requests and wish to remind all parents and carers that I am unable to authorise any holiday or absence requests unless they are exceptional circumstances, and even then, as a Head Teacher I am limited to the decisions I can make.

Taking your child out of school during term time may harm your child's academic progress. Parents do not have a legal right to take their children out of school on holiday.

Any decisions about granting absence and holiday requests will take into consideration:

- The nature of the absence and what the exceptional circumstances are
- Pupil's current attendance percentage
- Attainment and progress levels

I have attached further guidance from Wiltshire Council with this letter which I hope you find useful.

It is recommended to Head Teachers that circumstances where holiday absence **should not** be authorised include:

- Availability of cheap holidays
- Availability of desired accommodation, including time shares
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods
- Overlap with beginning or end of a term
- If the parents deem the trip to be 'educational'
- Due to parents work commitments

As a school, we have also revised our Absence and Holiday Request forms. We have sent you a copy of these electronically and they are available to download from the school's website. Hard copies can also be found in the front entrance of the school. I ask that you



use these forms with immediate effect to inform us of any absence/holiday requests, known future absences and reason for absence.

On a personal note, I understand how important family time and experiences can be for children and families. On a professional level, I hope you understand that my hands are tied and I have little option when it comes to authorising absence and holiday requests.

Attendance in school is vital and I know you all agree that children can only achieve their potential, attainment targets and make good progress if they are in school to receive the quality educational experiences and lessons which the staff provide. Poor attendance in school, particularly for unknown and unauthorised absence will be reported to the local Educational Welfare Officer for further investigation.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

Kind regards

Ms. L. Tight
Headteacher

