



# ASHTON KEYNES C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Gosditch, Ashton Keynes, Nr Swindon, Wiltshire SN6 6NZ

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17<sup>th</sup> July 2013

## Dear Parents/Carers

We are writing to let you know about some very immediate and important changes in the law relating to holidays / leave of absence in term time.

### Holidays during term time – a change in the law

From the 1<sup>st</sup> September the Government is introducing a change in the law relating to children's attendance at school and this will change the rules about taking children on holiday during term time. Here is a guide to how this affects the system which has previously been in place.

Details from the Department for Education are as follows:

#### Term Time leave of absence:

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below, **will come into force on 1 September 2013**.

*Amendments to the 2006 regulations **remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days.***

The new amendments make clear that:

1. **Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time, except in exceptional circumstances.**
2. *Only in exceptional circumstances, if leave is granted the headteacher must determine the number of school days a child can be away from school.*
3. The application must be made to the headteacher well in advance of the leave by a parent/carer the child normally lives with.

Applications should be made as far in advance of the leave as possible and **you should speak to the school before you book your leave.**



## How do schools consider *exceptional circumstance leave of absence* requests?

Schools will judge each request individually, taking into consideration:

- The time of year for the proposed trip
- If it's close to any assessment dates
- Your child's overall attendance record
- Any leave already taken in the school year
- The age and stage of education of your child
- The ability of your child to catch up the work that they have missed
- The reason why you are taking the time off during term time

Whilst absence **may** be granted during term time, **it is entirely the school's decision and is not a parental right.**

### Penalty notices for unauthorised absence

The law states you could be issued with a penalty notice if your child is absent from school without permission. Penalty notices can be issued by:

- Local Councils
- Headteachers (including the Deputy Head when authorised by the Head)
- The Police

Every adult who is legally responsible for ensuring their child or children attend school will have to pay a separate penalty notice. For example, in cases where two parents are legally responsible for their child's school attendance, **EACH PARENT** will receive a separate penalty notice for **EACH CHILD**.

- When paid within 21 days of receiving the letter £60 per child
- When paid between 21 and 28 days of receiving the letter £120 per child

So, if **two** children go on an **unauthorised leave of absence**, then **each parent** will have to pay £120 each, if it is paid within 21 days, making a total of £240, or if paid between 21 and 28 days then £240 each, making a total of £480 and if you fail to pay a penalty fine within 42 days you can be prosecuted.

Therefore, if a leave of absence request is not authorised you are advised not to take your child out of school.

The Governors and staff of Ashton Keynes School will fully support the headteacher's decision in the consideration process.

More information about this is available at the following website.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00223868/regulations-amendments>

We know that this may present difficulties for many families but our school now has to by law follow this directive and we thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Chair of Governors

