



LEVENS SCHOOL

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Holidays in Term Time

21st October 2015

Dear Parents

I am writing to let you know about the change in school policy regarding holidays during term time. Since 1st September 2013, parents have not been entitled to take their child on holiday during the school term and schools lost their dispensation to authorise such holidays entirely.

The Government compiled criteria defining exceptional circumstances:

- Family needs arising from service in the armed forces or from a parent working abroad
- Family bereavements
- Exceptional family ceremonies
- A holiday necessitated due to a disability or illness in the family

Schools are advised that the cost of holidays, work rotas of parents and working in tourism or on farms can not be considered to be exceptional reasons.

Our school has always endeavoured to be as reasonable as possible where holidays are concerned, however it is now imperative that school follows statutory requirements outlined in government policy and is consistent with other schools in the local area.

The impact of poor attendance has been extensively researched in the UK. Pupil absence figures and both GCSE and primary school test results highlight the importance of clamping down on pupil absence to ensure more pupils regularly attend school, and ultimately leave with the qualifications needed to succeed in modern Britain. Today's announcement from the Department of Education states: "*Our evidence shows missing the equivalent of just one week a year from school can mean a child is significantly less likely to achieve good GCSE grades, having a lasting effect on their life chances.*"

The governors have asked me to inform you that parents will be required to write to the headteacher to request any leave of absence, but only if they believe their circumstances to be exceptional. Parents are asked to give as much notice as possible and to include in the letter details about the reason for absence. If appropriate, parents will then be invited into school to meet with the headteacher to discuss their individual request. As a result, there will no longer be an Absence Request form used by school and parents will be informed of decisions in writing.

Thank you for your understanding and support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Jane Farraday



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