



January 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Unauthorised leave in term time

You will be aware the Department for Education (DfE) guidance states that head teachers should not grant students a leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances.

We received numerous applications where there are not exceptional circumstances, as the local authority as a whole looks to improve attendance, schools are being asked to ensure that no unauthorised leave is taken during term time.

I am therefore asking that you be mindful of this when making applications and understanding of the criteria below which outline the process that must be followed and the steps that school will potentially take in line with the DfE guidance.

- An application for time out of school during term time must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Application forms are available from the school office and should be accompanied by supporting evidence where necessary.
- Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.
- If the school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised.
- If a pupil of compulsory school age has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within the previous 10 weeks, school may choose to request that the Local Authority issue a fixed penalty notice.

If you have any questions regarding the information above, please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office 0191 295 2280.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Claire Andrew".

**Claire Andrew**  
**Assistant Head teacher**