

# Leave of Absence Policy



**Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. *The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.* Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.**

### Holidays in Term Time:

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school times are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is a clear link between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so will performance and achievement, further poor attendance can lead to social exclusion and, in some cases, to anti-social behaviour and crime.

The school holiday dates are published each year in advance and we strongly advise parents/carers to book family holidays during the school holidays.

### Policy:

- Gainford CE Primary School will not routinely grant permission for holidays or extended leave to be taken in term time and would discourage parents/carers making an application for term time holiday/extended leave 'exceptional' circumstances.
- Holidays will not, under any circumstances, be authorised at the following times:
  - The first three weeks of any academic year
  - The two weeks prior to and during testing weeks for Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 (these weeks will be confirmed in September each year but as a guide testing runs from the Monday following the first Bank Holiday in May until half term).
  - When a pupil's attendance for the current academic year falls significantly below **95%** (This percentage excludes any previous year's authorised holiday)

### Special or Exceptional Circumstances:

The Headteacher may, for example, consider the following circumstances as 'exceptional':

1. Where a parent has to take holidays at a time specified by their employer and this has been confirmed in writing. This would include parents who work in certain professions, for example factory workers, fire fighters, armed forces. The Headteacher will use their knowledge of families to manage requests made by self-employed parents.
2. There has been a death or significant trauma in the family and a holiday is considered to be beneficial for the child/parent.
3. To allow pupils to return to their country of origin for family, religious or cultural reasons.

However the following would not be considered 'exceptional' circumstances and will not be authorised:

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

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

All applications for leave must be made in advance of booking using the Leave of Absence Holiday Request Form at the discretion of the school to a maximum of 10 days in any academic year *may* be authorised. In making a decision the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised. The matter will then be passed to One Point with a request that a Penalty Notice is considered. Failure to pay will normally lead to prosecution.