

# **BOURNE COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**

### **1 Principles**

- 1.1 East Sussex County Council Education Welfare Team and Bourne Primary School strongly discourage absence from school unless absolutely essential, in keeping with the school's aim to maximise the potential of all pupils.

### **2 Procedures:**

- 2.1 Every request for leave of absence, other than for minor appointments, is for the headteacher to consider. In making any decision, the headteacher will take into account the family's circumstances and balance these with his duties toward the effective management of the school and the welfare of the child.
- 2.2 The Governing Body, through the headteacher, will communicate the school's expectations and its procedures to parents:

### **3 Exceptional Leave of Absence**

- 3.1 Only in exceptional circumstances will a request for special leave of absence be considered by the school during term time.
- 3.2 The headteacher may refuse the whole period requested by a pupil's parents, grant part of the period and refuse the remainder, or grant the whole of the period requested.
- 3.3 A letter refusing a request will explain the reasons for the refusal and what action will be taken if the parents ignore the refusal and keep their child away.
- 3.4 The headteacher will have discretion to allow up to 5 days, absence in a school year for a child/children if s/he believe that the circumstances warrant it, namely:
- for service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education; and
  - when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis
- 3.5 Compassionate leave of up to one school week may be granted for pupils who suffer the bereavement of an immediate family member, not including grandparents, and these requests will be dealt with on an individual basis.
- 3.6 Compassionate leave of one day may be granted so that a pupil may attend the funeral of a member of their immediate family, although evidence of this will be required

### **4 Refusal of Leave:**

- 4.1 The school will not authorise any request for leave during term time, apart from the exceptions listed in 3.4
- 4.2 Any leave of absence will not be authorised in the following circumstances:
- Where economic factors are cited – cheap package holidays or air fares.
  - During National Examinations - No arranged period of absence will be authorised for any child who would be taking national examinations such as Y2 and Y6.
  - Where a child's attendance has fallen below 95% in the last 12 months

## **5 Permission to take leave of absence:**

- 5.1 Where, in exceptional circumstances, permission is granted the headteacher will state in writing:
- the expected date of return;
  - that the parents are expected to contact the school if anything delays the pupil returning to school when expected;
  - what action will be taken if the pupil fails to return when expected.

## **6 Failure to Return From Absence**

- 6.1 Where a pupil fails to return as agreed, the headteacher may take advice from the Education Support Behaviour and Attendance Service, which could result in children being removed from the school roll
- 6.2 The Pupil Welfare Office and the Inclusion Manager will ensure that there was no good reason for the pupil's absence, such as disrupted travel arrangements or illness, before deleting the pupil. These may require evidence.
- 6.3 The school and the Education Welfare Team will make reasonable enquiry to locate the pupil before the deletion is made.
- 6.4 The school will delete the pupil from the school registers and transfer the pupil's information to the Missing Children's Database.
- 6.5 If the pupil is located, the school will take steps to address the reasons for the pupil's failure to attend, accessing support from other agencies where appropriate.

## **7 Travellers**

- 7.1 Travellers are recognised as a distinct ethnic minority. They move around as part of their trade or business and the children usually travel with them. *People who are on extended holidays, including those on "world tours", are not included in the definition of travellers.*
- 7.2 When travellers' children are unable to attend school because they are travelling, and this has been agreed with the relevant services, the absence should be marked as authorised using Attendance Code T.
- 7.3 Travellers will be encouraged to access education whilst travelling and, if they attend educational provision through registration at another school or specialist provision, they can be marked as "present at approved educational activity"
- 7.4 The headteacher may refer cases to the Travellers Service and Education Welfare Team for advice.

## **8 Record-keeping**

- 8.1 The school will keep records of authorisations and refusals on file for future reference in the event of complaint or, indeed, further applications. Reasons for the decision reached will be kept in order to ensure consistency of approach.

## **9 Fixed Penalty Notices**

- 9.1 Parents who take their children on holiday without the school's consent, will be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice from the Education Welfare Team of £60 per parent for each child. Parents who fail to pay will be subject to criminal prosecution.

## **10 Monitoring and Review**

- 10.1 This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, who reports to the Governing Body about its effectiveness.
- 10.2 This policy will be reviewed every two years

# BOURNE COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## REQUEST FOR A HOLIDAY IN TERM TIME

### NOTICE TO PARENTS/CARERS

Dear Parents/Carers

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. Any absence from school will disrupt your child's learning. You may consider that a holiday will be educational but your child will still miss out on the teaching that their classmates will receive. Children returning from a term time holiday are also unprepared for the lessons which build on the teaching they have missed. Teachers then have to give more time to help individual children catch up on missed work. This poses a potential risk of the under achievement of other students in the class. This is something we *all* have a responsibility to avoid.

The Department for Education does allow a head teacher the discretion to consider authorising a holiday in term time but *only* in special circumstances – these are defined as follows:-

- i) service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education
- ii) when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis

If you consider that your request falls into this category you will need to complete the form on the reverse of this notification. A response will be sent to you as soon as possible. If the holiday is not considered to be a special circumstance, and you nevertheless take your child out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised in line with County Council guidance.

**In the case of an unauthorised holiday the Education Support, Behaviour & Attendance Service will be notified of the holiday taken and a Penalty Notice will be issued. Please note that such a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 which increases to £120 if not paid within the first 28 days. Thereafter, if the Penalty remains unpaid this may result in legal action.**

All holiday requests must be completed on the attached form, letters will not be accepted. This should be returned to the school at least 14 days before the start of the absence.

I hope you will support our efforts to raise attendance and attainment at our school.

Yours sincerely



Mr J. Maxwell  
Head Teacher

# BOURNE COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR A HOLIDAY DURING TERM TIME

If you consider you have to take a holiday in term time, and that you have special circumstances, please complete this form and return to the school at least 14 days before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

Pupil Name ..... Tutor Group/Class .....

Home Address .....

First day of absence ..... Date of return to school .....

Total number of days missed .....

Reasons for absence .....

.....  
.....  
.....

***I understand that if the request is unauthorised the Education Support, Behaviour & Attendance Service will be notified of the holiday taken and a Penalty Notice will be issued. I understand that a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school and that this is a fine of £60 which increases to £120 if not paid within the first 28 days. I understand that if I do not pay this may result in legal action.***

Name of Parent/Carer making application .....

Signed ..... Dated .....

(Please ensure you are giving at least 14 day's notice of the proposed absence)

✂ .....

Pupil Name ..... Tutor Group .....

**AUTHORISED:** Your holiday request has been authorised for the following dates:  
\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

**UNAUTHORISED:** Your holiday request has been unauthorised for the following dates:  
\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ as it does not meet the  
criteria set  
by the Department for Education

**(NB if you proceed to take an unauthorised holiday this will result in a Penalty Notice)**

Signed ..... Headteacher

Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_