



Oakmeadow CE Primary School

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Head teacher: Mrs S Hill BA (hons) QTS PG Cert NPQH

Deputy Head teacher: Miss J Taylor

7th September 2023

Dear families,

As we start the new academic year, I wanted to take the opportunity to update families on Request for Leave policies and procedures. The law is very clear on absence – we have strict guidelines to adhere to and Headteachers are now only allowed to authorise a leave of absence when an application has been made in advance, and it's felt to be for an exceptional circumstance. An annual family holiday is not deemed an exceptional circumstance and would be logged as unauthorised absence. I felt it would be useful to clarify, before the year gets further underway, that if a child has a period of unauthorised absence, it is most likely this will result in a fine or further action from the local authority.

Exceptional circumstances may be significant events that will not occur again in a child's school life or where it is necessary for the child to attend or the event and/or it cannot be organised out of school time. To request exceptional leave, parents should fill out a Request for Leave form, obtainable from the school office or on our website under 'Term Dates' giving us as much information as possible to support decision making. Please be aware that every request for leave form is unique and decisions will be made according to the individual.

Term dates are accessible on our website and it is parental responsibility to check these before booking a holiday.

If a requested period of absence has not been authorised, or requested prior to leaving, details will be passed to Shropshire Council's Education Access Service. The Council may, in the following circumstances, issue a formal warning, serve a Fixed Penalty Notice or take court action in respect of non-school attendance for this and any future unauthorised absence where:

- Parents have not sought permission from the headteacher before taking their child out of school for a holiday in term time
- The headteacher has unauthorised the request but the absence occurs anyway; or
- A pupil has not returned to school by the agreed date ie. An excessive delayed return from an extended holiday without prior school permission.



Every child at Oakmeadow has a target attendance of 97% and this allows for 6 days absence for usual childhood illness. Persistent Absence is defined as any child who has attendance below 90%. Holidays in term time can impact on your child's attendance figure significantly. When children are taken out of school during term not only does the education of the individual child suffer, but it can cause disruption to the rest of the class, with teachers having to repeat work and give extra help so that the pupil can catch up. Not taking into account other absences, just taking a fortnight's holiday each year means that, between the ages of five to 16, a child would miss around half an academic year of learning.

I hope this helps understanding of our procedures and decisions when requesting leave,

Best wishes

Samantha Hill
Headteacher

