



Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018

### **Requests for leave during term time**

Dear Parents and carers,

As you will be aware, there is an ongoing national agenda to improve attendance at all levels of schooling, as research continues to show the clear link between regular attendance and consistent, good progress.

In September 2013 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force. These regulations make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively.

Any requests should be on an official school absence request form and handed into the school office for consideration 2 weeks prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made. In these cases, a detailed written reason explaining the circumstances must accompany the request and schools will then make a final decision. However, even in cases of extreme circumstances, the school must always consider the educational implications of any absence on a student's progress and will look carefully at previous attendance before making a final decision. Please note that issues such as parents' annual leave during term time, financial costs (cheaper holidays) or family birthday etc will not be considered as an exceptional circumstance.

You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996. We continue to strive for our attendance figure to be in line with the National Average expectation. On review of our criteria the Governors have agreed to increase the level of attendance required to 96% to be in line with this expectation.

**Therefore, in summary, Pinxton Village Infant Schools and Kirkstead Junior Academy will apply for penalty notices in the following circumstances:**

- **Requests for leave are not made at least 2 weeks in advance of the absence.**
  - **The circumstances provided are not considered exceptional.**
- **A child's attendance is below 96%, including the absence of the requested leave.**

Any parent wishing to apply for a leave of absence during term time, should make the application at least 2 weeks in advance of the planned absence, by using the 'Request for Leave of Absence Form'.

We are aware that for some families, the new regulations may create difficulties, however, we are committed to ensuring that all children have the best opportunity to make progress and support any developments that enable them to do this. We will be working closely with Derbyshire County Council to monitor and record all applications for leave of absence. Please note that any unauthorised holidays will be recorded as unauthorised absences and may lead to the involvement of the Education Welfare Service and subsequent further action. Also, any such absence masquerading as illness will also be recorded as similar.

We are grateful to parents for their efforts to ensure that students attend school on a regular basis.

Thank you in anticipation of your continued support with this and other matters in the future.

Mrs Jan Pierce, Mrs Karen Slater and Mrs Christine Avery