



Dolphinholme Church of England Primary School

Dolphinholme, Lancaster, Lancashire, LA2 9AN

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Headteacher: Mrs C Winter

Inspiring success, celebrating achievement

22 May 2013

Dear Parent,

Pupil Attendance – Leave in Term Time

I am writing to you about some important changes to school policy regarding holidays in term time. As many of you know when requests supported by valid reasons have been received for holidays in term I have, if possible, granted them as authorised absences.

The Government has changed the law relating to attendance from September 2013.

This decision has been made to encourage schools to take a firmer stance on unnecessary absence and to dispel the myth held by many parents that there is an entitlement to time off school for holidays in term time.

As of **1st September 2013** **Headteachers will not be allowed** to authorise any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

These rules will apply to all schools. The Governing Body of our school has taken the decision to make the following changes to school policy:

Taking a child out of school 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 may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

THERE IS NO AUTOMATIC ENTITLEMENT IN LAW TO TIME OFF IN SCHOOL TIME TO GO ON HOLIDAY.

ALL applications must be made, in advance, by the parent of residence using the 'Request for leave of absence form' available from Mrs. Winter, the school office and our website.

Full details of procedures and policy are available from school, but it is important that you understand **leave in term time will not be agreed by the school at any time unless circumstances surrounding the request are considered to be exceptional**. The Governing Body of this school has decided circumstances that could not be planned for would be exceptional. Clearly this does not include holidays.

In addition to the above when making a decision whether or not to classify an absence as 'exceptional circumstances' the school will continue to consider, along with criteria on the holiday the request form, the following:

Leave will not be agreed by us:

- When a pupil is just starting the school. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.
- Transition from FS to KS1, to KS1 to KS2
- Immediately before and during assessment periods;
- **During examinations - although not yet confirmed by the DFE SATS FOR YEAR 6 IN 2014 are expected to take place between 12th - 20th May**
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- Where a pupil's attendance rate is already below (95%) or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking holiday leave.

We hope all parents will support the school in their efforts to reduce unnecessary absence and therefore minimising the impact on your child's education. We will of course continue to look at each case individually when making a decision. We have special codes to apply when children are 'educated' off site or taking music exams, visiting the dentist or doctor etc.

Please contact me if you wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Cathy Winter
Headteacher

DOLPHINHOLME C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS 2013 – 2014

AUTUMN TERM 2013

Open	5 th September
Half term close	25 th October
Open	4 th November
Christmas Holidays Close	20 th December

SPRING TERM 2014

<i>Teachers Days (school closed)</i>	<i>2nd & 3rd January</i>
Open	6 th January
Half term close	14 th February
Open	24 th February
Easter Holidays Close	4 th April

SUMMER TERM 2014

Open	22 nd April
May Day Closure	5 th May
Half term close	23 rd May
Open	2 nd June
<i>Teachers Days (school closed)</i>	<i>27th & 30th June</i>
Summer Holiday Close	22 nd July
Teachers Day	23 rd July