



Attendance & Behaviour Service

# **St Mary's CofE Primary School**

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**

# **POLICY - LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

## **1. Aims**

The aim of this policy is to set out the way in which St Mary's monitors and promotes the attendance and punctuality of its pupils. St Mary's is committed to maximising the potential of every child and good attendance and punctuality are essential to this aim. We feel this will be achieved, with the support of parents/carers by ensuring that leave of absence will not be taken in school time, other than in exceptional circumstances. Absence during term time for any reason interrupts the continuity of teaching and learning and disrupts the educational progress of pupils.

## **2. The Law**

From 1 September 2013 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amends the 2006 Regulations and makes clear that Head Teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances

## **3. Leave of Absence**

- (i) In exceptional circumstances *St Mary's* will consider a request for leave of absence for one period of absence during the academic year.

## **4. Exceptional Circumstances**

The Head Teacher or person designated by the Head Teacher will determine what are considered to be exceptional circumstances (*school to consider what are exceptional circumstances, these do not need to be defined within the policy*).

The following may be examples of exceptional circumstances:

- To allow a pupil to return to their country of origin for family, religious or cultural reasons
- Unavoidable circumstances e.g. the parent/carer has inflexible leave allocation and this has been confirmed by the employer.
- A family member is seriously ill.
- There has been a death or significant trauma in the family and a leave of absence is deemed appropriate.

## 5. Additional Information

St Mary's will ensure that all parents/carers receive a copy of this Leave of Absence Policy which forms part of the school attendance policy.

- Parents/carers will be required to complete a leave of absence request form available from the school office and return it to school.
- Parents/carers may be required to attend an interview to discuss their request for a leave of absence.
- Parents/carers will normally be notified of the outcome of their application for a leave of absence within 10 school days of the date of the application.

If the leave of absence is not agreed by the school, but the pupil is absent on the requested dates, the absence will be recorded as 'O' this will mean that the absence has been recorded on the school attendance register as unauthorised.

**Where a pupil is absent from school without permission of the school, the parent/carer of the pupil may be issued with a £60.00 Penalty Notice per parent per child. If the notice remains unpaid after 21 days the penalty increases to £120.00. If the notice remains unpaid after 28 days the Local Authority may commence proceedings under section 444(1) of the 1996 Education Act in the Magistrates Court.**

This policy after consultation with Governors will form part of St Mary's School attendance policy.

December 2013

Dear Parents,

Please find attached a copy of the school's Leave of Absence policy.

After some recent confusion, we felt it necessary to send a copy to make clear the rules regarding children being absent during term time.

PLEASE NOTE: As of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 the 10 days holiday leave, which was at the discretion of the Head Teacher **no longer applies**. This means that we are unable to give permission for any child to take holidays during term time.

All holidays for this academic year which were booked BEFORE 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 will be honoured as we have received proof of booking. These holidays will NOT be marked as unauthorised leave.

The attached policy has now been approved by our Governing Body and comes into immediate effect.

All future requests for leave (unless they are Exceptional Circumstances) during term time – by law – will have to be recorded as unauthorised leave of absence and passed on to the Education Welfare team at Halton Borough Council.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding on this very important matter.