



St. Botolph's CE Primary School

New day endless possibilities!



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ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL –

SOME CLARIFICATION AND REQUESTS FROM GOVERNORS

Dear Parents/Carers

As you are fully aware, the Governors and Staff at St Botolph's school regard the regular attendance of children at school as being vital to each child's education and development. It is for this reason that non attendances (however short or infrequent) are treated seriously and we don't think you would expect us to do anything less.

We require all pupils on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. Any time missed from school is detrimental to progress and has a negative impact on a child's achievement.

New government guidelines, which came into effect on 1st September 2013, prevent schools from granting any leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. A family holiday during term-time does not fall under the category of 'exceptional circumstances' and **the school is therefore unable to grant leave of absence for any family holiday**. We realise that Parents/Carers may still choose to take family holidays in term time, but we need you to appreciate and accept that we cannot authorise them.

We do understand that there are exceptional circumstances under which a Parent/Carer may legitimately request leave of absence for a child, for example – a family crisis. **We expect Parents/Carers to contact the school and request the leave of absence on the official school form, outlining the reason and the specific dates when leave is required and giving the required notice (at least 2 weeks prior to going) to enable the Governors to meet and make a considered and informed decision.** Forms requesting leave of absence without giving reasons or sufficient details will be returned for further information before the request is considered.

Clarification re Fines

If you choose to still take an unauthorised holiday however short it is, the school has to pass this on to our Educational Welfare Officer who may pass the matter on to the Local Authority.

The Local Authority, not the school, then choose whether to issue a fine. St. Botolph's School does not receive any of this money. We are a Local Authority school and are therefore bound by their policies and procedures.

Please note: The Parent(s)/Carer(s) of any pupil who has absences recorded as a result of an unauthorised family holiday, may each be fined £60 per child which must be paid within a 21 day period. Should you fail to pay this, the fine will go up to £120 per parent per child and this has to be paid within the 28 days of the

initial fine being issued. Should you fail to pay this the case will taken to magistrates court for non payment of a fine.

Governors do not refuse to authorise leave of absence with the intention of upsetting or annoying our Parents/Carers. We are however bound by law under Section 538 of the Education Act 2006 which requires governing bodies to provide information requested by the Secretary of State. This includes absence data that is collected every term through the School Census.

What we ask for:

- **Honesty** – please don't lie to us, we don't appreciate it and it is unfair to put this pressure on your children. If you're taking a holiday, be upfront and expect it not to be authorised.
- **Notice** – We expect Parents/Carers to contact the school and request the leave of absence on the official school form outlining the reason and the specific dates when leave is required and giving the required notice to enable the Governors to meet and make a considered and informed decision.
- **Acceptance** – if the absence is unauthorised , accept that we have to pass this on to our Educational Welfare Officer for further investigations including home visits and the potential fine that may be issued as a result.

Parents/Carers can seek further clarification from our current Education Welfare Officer on 07947 994289 or email naina.zavery@ews-m.com

Regards



Phil Marriott

Chair of Governors