



# **Absence in Term Time Policy**

**Adopted by Governing Body: June 2019**

**Due for review: 2022/23 (Governing Body)**

## **TRINITY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **ABSENCE IN TERM TIME POLICY**

On 1 September 2013, the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force, changing the rules about term-time holidays.

The amendments removed references to family holidays and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of 10 school days.

Parents were informed that during 2013/14, the school would adopt a pragmatic approach which defined pre-booked family holidays as 'exceptional' given that the introduction of regulations meant for a number of parents, events would not be repeated.

The amendments specify that the headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless they consider there to be "exceptional circumstances" for doing so. If leave is granted, the headteacher should determine the number of days a child can be away from school. The Governing Body agreed that it is important to all families that where leave of absence is granted, this should be done against clear criteria.

#### **Definitions of 'Exceptional Circumstances'**

'Exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as:

- Being unforeseen and unavoidable.
- Being a 'one off' event not be repeated.
- Being a significant life-event for the child.
- Being for compassionate reasons.

Given this interpretation, examples where absence would be granted may include, but are not limited to:

- Being unable to return to school due to breakdown.
- Attending the funeral of a close family member.
- Attending the wedding of a close family member.
- Competing in major sporting event.
- Time off to visit a terminally ill close family member.

Family holidays of any form do not fit under this definition. Nor would permission be granted for the convenience (business, financial or otherwise) of parents.

While decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, requests will normally be refused.

## **Penalty Notices**

Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their child aged 5-16, if registered at a school, attends that school regularly.

If the leave of absence for holiday was not authorised by the school, the child's absences will be marked in the school register as unauthorised absences and this may result in a Truancy Penalty Notice of £60 (rising to £120 within 28 days) per parent per child being issued by the Local Authority.

In some cases, parents may be prosecuted for the offence of failure to ensure regular attendance at school. This fine is payable to the Local Authority.

Where there is evidence that the school has been deliberately misled by parents in relation to explanations for absences, register codes will be amended to indicate an unauthorised absence and parents will be reported to the Educational Welfare Service.

## **Deleting a pupil from roll after absence**

### *Children of compulsory school age*

Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (Education) Regulations 2006 sets out the circumstances under which a pupil of compulsory school age can legally be removed from the school roll.

If the school authorises an absence for more than 10 school days and the pupil does not return within 10 school days of the agreed return date, then he/she may be deleted from the roll. This is not the case if the school has reason to believe the pupil's return is prevented by an "unavoidable cause". Section 1(f)

If the absence is not authorised, then the pupil may be deleted from the roll after 20 school days. Section 1(h)

### *Children who are not of compulsory school age*

Section 3 of Regulation 8 covers absence of children who are not of compulsory school age. A pupil may be removed from the roll if:

- He/she has been absent, unauthorised, for more than 20 days; and
- The school has reason to believe the absence is not due to sickness or an unavoidable cause; and
- The school has not been able to find out where he/she is.

Adopted by the Governing Body, April 2014

Appendix 1 – Letter to be sent in event of unexplained absence

Dear Parents/Carers,

**Absence from school**

Our records indicate that your child was absent from school on .....

As no reason was given for this absence, we are required to recorded this as an 'unauthorised absence'.

Where children are absent from school without reason provided from parents or carers, this does raise our concern for the child's welfare.

Please could you ensure that if your child is absent from school for any reason that the school is informed as soon as possible.

Many thanks,

John Rowe

Headteacher