



Authorisation of Leave of Absence

Dear Parents/Carers

As you will be aware, from September 2013, the legislation concerning the authorization of Leave of Absence has changed. All schools within their local cluster have been encouraged to meet together to decide upon a common approach to the new arrangements. This has been done and it has been decided to adopt the same approach as Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School and look at each request individually to judge if there are exceptional circumstances to authorise leave. Schools are not allowed to have a blanket policy to cover all exceptional circumstances but the regulations make it very clear that holidays should not be routinely taken in term time and that school attendance must be prioritised. For example, cheaper travel or family birthdays and occasions are not exceptional circumstances and therefore cannot be authorised. Schools will have to justify their decisions to authorise absence to Ofsted and therefore we have to be very clear that the circumstances are exceptional and are supported by good evidence.

Parents are asked to apply for authorization of leave at least 2 weeks before the leave is to be taken and to provide a full explanation of the exceptional circumstances with any supporting evidence if appropriate. Holidays should not be booked without seeking prior authorisation. The forms are available from the school.

Schools are now expected to robustly follow up any unauthorised absences by reporting them to Derbyshire County Council who will decide whether or not to pursue a fine. This is fully explained in the guidance **'Penalty Notices – Advice for Parents and Carers'** which is available on the school website but in summary, if the decision is taken to fine parents, the fine would be £120 per parent per child e.g. 2 parents taking 2 children out of school would be fined £480. If this is not paid in 28 days, parents may be taken to court by DCC. Please note.

We would like to stress that these regulations are statutory and as such we are bound by law to implement them. They are not up to the wishes of individual schools and schools do not receive the proceeds from the fines. We hope this letter clarifies things somewhat. Thank you for your understanding on this matter.