



Winster Primary School

C of E (Controlled)

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Date: 16th July 2014

Dear Parents/Carers

Leave of Absence Requests

Last year I wrote to you about the requirements placed on schools by central Government in relation to attendance. Both the Department for Education and local authorities expect schools to promote good attendance and reduce absences, including persistent absence. This is because we know that missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. As a school we work incredibly hard to support all children and their families so as to ensure that all children have good attendance. Whilst our overall attendance last year stood at 95.8%, which met the national average of 95.7%, I am delighted to tell you that this year our overall attendance has increased to 96.6%.

As you know from 1st September 2013 the Government introduced new regulations regarding the authorisation of leave of absence for the purpose of holidays. These regulations stated that Headteachers may not authorise any leave of absence for holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, eg a significant family event.

At the time of writing last year, the Matlock cluster of schools took the decision not to refer to the local authority, any parents taking their children out of school for holidays that had not been authorised. However, at a recent meeting, all headteachers from the Matlock cluster made the decision, which was ratified by the Governors, that **from 1st September 2014** this will no longer be the case and **any unauthorised absences will be referred to the local authority**. This may result in parents being issued with a fixed penalty notice and/or court action.

This is Government policy and parents who take their children on holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absences for their child. These remain on the child's record and will be monitored for further action by the Education Welfare Service. The Governors feel unhappy about putting the school in this situation but our hands are tied. In all other areas of school life, we will continue to work as closely as possible with parents to support the children's development.

Thank you for your support and understanding.

Regards,

Sharon Slack - Headteacher

Mike Hatfield - Chair of Governors

School Cluster

S. Slack - Winster CE Primary
C. Newton - All Saints' CE Juniors
S. Gostick - Darley Dale Primary
P. Scully - St. Joseph's RC Primary
E. Wilkes, S. Laming - Highfields

P. Wilde - South Darley CE Primary
P. Hunter - Elton CE Primary
T. Holmes - Tansley Primary
K. Maycock - Lea Primary
L. Beeson - Matlock All Saints' CE Infants