



QUEEN'S PARK HIGH SCHOOL

Important Information Regarding Holiday Absence Requests

Dear Parent/Carer

Holidays taken during term time

Please find below the latest guidance from the Department for Education which the Local Authority advised all schools to share with parents and carers.

The Government discourages the taking of holidays in term time. Evidence shows that children who miss school do not achieve as well as those who attend regularly.

As of September 2013, the law has restricted a Head Teacher's ability to authorise holidays during term time. Head Teachers are now only empowered to approve a leave of absence when it is requested in advance by the parent or carer with whom the child resides and when circumstances of the requested leave are 'exceptional'.

As of 19th August 2024, the law ceases to include a leave of absence for a family holiday. A leave of absence should not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

The following will **not** be deemed to be exceptional circumstances (this list is not exhaustive)

- Family holiday
- Availability of less expensive holiday
- Availability of holiday accommodation
- Parent/carer's working commitments
- Holiday pre-booked by another family member

As a school, our aim is to reduce the number of learning days lost through absence and students are given a minimum target grade of 95% in accordance with our attendance strategy: Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow.

Applications for Exceptional Leave of Absence (LOA) will be considered individually, considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request .

Please note the National threshold for penalty notices is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. (There are 2 sessions in a school day morning and afternoon). A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. The threshold can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the following Autumn Term).

Penalty charges will be £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days per parent/carer per child.

More information on Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) can be found by clicking on the link below:
<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/education-and-learning/early-years-and-childcare/education-welfare-service/fixed-penalty-notice/school-absence-fines>

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the school to thank you for your full support in this matter by not taking your child out of school during term time.

This new legislation will bring about increased attendance and improving standards in our borough's schools.

Further information can be obtained from www.dfe.gov.uk

Yours sincerely



Mr T Kearns
Headteacher

