

Gorsemoor Primary School

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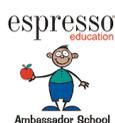
Dear Parents/Carers

We have received important information from the Local Authority regarding changes to Leave of Absence (holiday) in term time, Penalty Notice for persistent absence and lateness. These important changes will come into effect from 1 January 2018.

We enclose a copy of the letter from the Local Authority informing parents/carers of the changes. In addition, a copy of Staffordshire Local Authority code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices Sept 2017 is available on Gorsemoor Primary School's Website and Staffordshire County Council's website. For clarification:

- From the 1 January 2018 **ANY** leave of absence (holiday) in term time may result in you as a parent receiving a penalty notice fine.
- A Penalty Notice may be issued for 10 late marks or 10 unauthorised absences, which is equal to 5 days over a period of twelve weeks within term time. This could possibly mean you would receive a penalty warning notice and potentially a fine.
- For Persistent absence and lateness 20 sessions of unauthorised leave over a twelve week period could result in a fine rather than ten absences.
- If you have made a request for a leave of absence prior to the 1 January 2018 then the council can apply the rules in the code of practice to any leaves of absence taken after 1 January 2018.
- This is regardless of a high attendance record for your child.

The Head teacher will still be the only person able to authorise leave in term time, but this will only apply in exceptional circumstances. These are circumstances involving a situation or appointment that has arisen that means it is necessary for your child to be absent from school on a particular day / days in term time. It is important to make it clear to you that if you choose to make the decision to go on holiday during term time, this is likely to be unauthorised and could lead to a fine being issued. For this reason, as far as possible, please make your requests in advance of any decision you finally choose to make. I carefully consider each request, sometimes taking additional advice from the local authority, to ensure we are as fair as possible to everyone. Very few requests for leave during term time are authorised because the reason for an absence must be 'exceptional'.



We are appreciative that many of you make doctors and dentist appointments for your children outside of the school day. However, if it is necessary for your child to attend a medical appointment during the school day could we politely remind you that we need to see a copy of the appointment letter in order to authorise their absence. This can be an electronic or paper copy to show to the staff in the school office.

Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. We hope we can work together with parents and carers to achieve excellent attendance at Gorsemoor.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C Evans
Headteacher

