



Harcourt Primary School

Biggins Wood Road, Folkestone, Kent. CT19 4NE
Tel: Folkestone (01303) 275294
Fax: Folkestone (01303) 279176

20th July 2024

Reference – Changes to Term Time Holiday Regulations

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will be aware the law around attendance is significantly changing for the 2024/25 academic year. With this in mind I thought it would be useful to share some of these changes with you in case any of you were considering booking term time holidays.

The main changes are as follows:

- The Department for Education no longer allows me to authorise term time holidays in any circumstance. Legislation states that the DFE does not recognise a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation to be an exceptional circumstance
- The Department for Education no longer accept the reason that some businesses/companies will only allow staff to take holiday leave at certain times of the year, e.g. during term time
- If a parent requests leave for a family emergency or exceptional circumstance, the school will request additional information such as flight or booking details as proof before a decision will be made to issue a Penalty Notice
- If parents do not request a leave of absence and the school have a reasonable suspicion that a child has been away, the onus will be on parents to prove that this was not the case. For example when a child tells us they have been on holiday. The school can use social media posts as 'evidence'. The DFE state this is not a GDPR breach as the post is in the public domain

The Issuing of Penalty Notices

From September 2024 the school will be processing Penalty Notices for children that do not attend school due to a period of holiday leave.

If a Penalty Notice is issued the following will apply:

1. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child and the amount of the penalty will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days – failure to pay will result in prosecution
2. If a second Penalty Notice is issued within a rolling three year period, then the flat rate will be £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. There is no reduction for earlier payment – failure to pay will result in prosecution
3. If three or more periods of unauthorised absence occur within a rolling three year period a Penalty Notice will not be issued and KCC will consider instigating the prosecution of parents.

Head Teacher: Mr A Silk BA QTS (NPQH)

“Pupils enjoy learning in a calm and purposeful atmosphere without fear of bullying or discrimination... Pupils live up to teachers’ high expectations for their behaviour.”

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Please do remember as a school we have a legal duty to act within the law. From September the Headteacher has far less discretion over implementing the new legislation. I appreciate it is frustrating and that many of you will feel this process is unfair but as a school we will need to fully comply with our legal responsibility. This unfortunately will result in Penalty Notices being issued for term time holidays.

All school policies will be amended to reflect these changes in the coming months.

Yours sincerely,

A. Silk

Anthony Silk
Headteacher

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