

Seaburn Dene

Primary School

HEADTEACHER : MR J K HOWE

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Thursday, 19th December 2019

Holiday requests during term time **A CHANGE FROM JANUARY 2020**

Dear Parent/Carer,

Term time holiday regulations

As you may be aware, amendments to the Government Attendance Regulations (2006) I am unable to authorise any holidays taken during term time unless they are under exceptional circumstances. This is not a school decision, but a decision which has been made for all schools in the country and Seaburn Dene Primary School is expected to follow the same guidelines.

Impact of term time holidays on children

On a termly basis, we continue to monitor the impact that taking holidays in term time has had on our school attendance and on the attendance, learning and progress of individual children. There are several instances of children having more than 10 school days off for holidays during term time and we have a large number of children having more than 5 days off during the academic year for holidays.

When children have a term time holiday, as well as illness during the year, their attendance can drop below the Local Authority and National expectations. As a consequence, this can make it difficult for them to learn as effectively other children. This is also having a major impact on our attendance figures and in our school unauthorised term time holidays now sits at **double** the National Average.

CHANGES FROM 1st JANUARY 2020

Because of the impact term time holidays are having on the attendance of our children, governors have made a decision, based on expectations from the Local Authority, that term time holidays within the academic year (beginning of January 2020 – end of July 2020) could lead to Sunderland Council issuing a Penalty Notice. In the case of unauthorised term time leave, the letter that is sent by me refusing a term time leave (see Absence from Education form) application will be regarded as the formal warning. If you then take the decision to remove your child from school for the purpose of the holiday, Local Authority may consider issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice. Many Sunderland schools are now issuing fixed penalty warnings for any term time holidays, even if it is just one day.



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The penalty notice

The Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent, per child if paid after this date. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school. I understand that you may still make the decision to take your child on holiday during term time, however it is important that you are aware that this may result in a fine as stated.

Informing the School

As a school we must still be correctly and honestly informed, for safeguarding purposes, of the reasons for your child's absence, including if this is due to a holiday. Currently, an Absence from Education form must be filled in and school will continue to reply to each request in writing.

We have already booked our holiday from after 1st January 2020 next year...

As we are aware some families may already have booked their holiday for next academic year before governors have made the decision to change our school rules on term time holidays.

Therefore if you can bring proof into school that you have already booked your holidays for after 1st January 2020 before the date at the top of this letter (e.g booking form or email with date of booking), we will ensure that you do not receive a fine for the first 10 days of this holiday only.

If you would like to speak to me to discuss this letter, please do not hesitate to ring or make an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Howe
Headteacher

