



BLACKMINSTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Executive Headteacher: Ms Linda McQuone BSc(Hons), MA(Ed), PGCE, NPQH, MCCT

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Dear Parents/Carers

GUIDANCE FOR REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

This school is operating under the Local Authority Absence Policy based on the Education Regulations 2006 outlined below.

It is the policy of this school not to authorise student absence caused by taking a holiday in term time. There are 190 statutory school days in a year; so there are 175 other days which could be used for holidays and trips which would not have a negative effect on the education of a student.

Regulation 7 (4) of the Education Regulations 2006 makes it clear that parents do not have any right or entitlement to take a child out of school for the purposes of a term-time holiday. The same regulations stipulate that **'Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances'**.

It is the decision of the Head teacher as to what might constitute exceptional circumstances and each request for termtime absence will be considered on an individual basis. A Head teacher will not accept as an exceptional circumstance the fact that a holiday is cheaper during term-time.

Previous guidance from the Department of Education has suggested that special circumstances could include:

- For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holiday outside of term-time, providing the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupils' education and
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other after a crisis.

The Head teacher will also look very carefully at the child's previous attendance record and should he or she have concerns, then authorisation is almost certain to be denied. Other factors for consideration will include the likely impact on the child's education, particularly in terms of continuity of learning, as there is a strong link between the amount of absence in a school and the qualifications achieved by students and whether the holiday falls during a year in which the child is due to take a public examination or be involved in Government tests (e.g. SATs).

Applications for a leave of absence should be submitted at least 4 weeks before the proposed absence and parents are strongly advised to secure permission before confirming holiday arrangements. If a child is taken out of school and the absence has not been agreed by the Head teacher, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and will be noted on the child's records.

If you choose to take your child out of school for a holiday during term time for more than 5 days, we may refer this absence to the Education Investigation Service and you may be issued with a Fixed Penalty fine of £60.00 per child and per parent of absence if paid within 21 days or £120.00 per child and per parent if paid before a period of 28 days. As a parent you should consider carefully the implications of taking your child out of school during term time. You risk giving your child the unspoken message that school is not important. You also risk negatively affecting your child's academic progress and their relationships at school, as some children find it hard to renew friendships with other students when they return to school.

Leave of absence forms are available from the school office or our school website. Parents will be informed in writing of the outcome of their application.

Yours faithfully

Ms L McQuone
Executive Headteacher

