



BELMONT PRIMARY SCHOOL

HOLIDAY POLICY

Governors at Belmont Primary School adopt the holiday policy procedures from the Local Authority

Date approved by governors:2016.....

Date shared with staff2016.....

Due for review on: November 2017

11. LOCAL AUTHORITY - HOLIDAY POLICY

- 11.1 Holidays in term time can damage a child's education and future life prospects, particularly for those pupils with existing attendance problems, struggling with education or being absent at critical times in the school year. The Redcar and Cleveland Children's Services are committed to working in partnership with schools and families to manage and reduce school absence due to term time holidays. The LA has produced a leaflet to give to parents explaining the policy on taking holidays in term time (SD4). A recommended letter (SD5) should be sent from the school informing families of the LA's Holiday Policy.
- 11.2 The Government, the LA and the schools acknowledge the financial and work pressures some families are subject to and in appropriate circumstances are prepared to authorise term time holidays. Head Teachers can authorise up to 10 days holiday in term time in each academic year, however, parents must realise that this is not a right or an entitlement but is at the Head Teacher's discretion. Most parents acknowledge the need for these absences to be managed carefully to avoid having a detrimental effect on their child's education and co-operate with the schools, however, unfortunately a significant minority of parents take their children out of school without authority.
- 11.3 The government has introduced legislation allowing the LA to use penalty notices against parents who fail to ensure their children attend school and this is incorporated within our school attendance procedures. All schools within the Borough are encouraged to adopt a common holiday policy to ensure legal compliance;
- Only the head teacher has the discretion to authorise any holidays.
 - The Head Teacher should not normally authorise more than 10 days family holiday absence (i.e. not for a holiday with friends) in any one academic year unless there are very exceptional circumstances.
 - Except in very exceptional circumstances parents should provide at least one months advance notice in writing of any planned absence, Request for Authorisation of Holiday (SD6).
 - The students and family should make arrangements to undertake schoolwork during the holiday and/or arrange to complete school work they have missed as soon as possible upon return.
 - Except in very exceptional circumstances holiday absence should not be authorised at the following critical times.

- a) At any time in September (preferably not at all during Autumn Term of year 7);
- b) For any student whose attendance was avoidably below 95% in the previous 12 months; this represents 17 sessions missed in the year.
- c) At any time during formal external examination periods, e.g. Years 2 and 6 SATs and Key Stage 4 exams. The introduction of GCSE early entry and controlled assessments means that holidays will not normally be authorised in Yr10 or Yr11.
- d) For any student who has persistent unauthorised late marks (i.e. the register must show code 'U' which is recorded as a statistical absence).
- e) For any student where behaviour has resulted in reduced opportunities to learn in the last year.

It is important for the head teacher to decide on each case on its own merits.

- 11.4 The school should publish the formal holiday policy on an annual basis to all parents. Holiday absence taken without approval will be recorded as an unauthorised holiday absence (code G).
- 11.5 When the school has decided not to authorise a holiday in accordance with the policy they may make a referral to the Education Welfare Service. The service should generally issue a HOLPOL2 letter (EW25) which is issued to both parent(s)/carer(s) concerned and is sent with the Penalty Notice (EW15). A notice will only be issued where the circumstances would support a successful prosecution for failing to ensure the regular attendance of a child in the event of the notice not being paid. Where the pupil has already been referred to the Education Welfare Service and the case is in procedures, the unauthorised holiday should be considered as part of that process as the issue of the penalty notice may not be appropriate. Should the parent raise compelling grounds for leniency or mitigation, and following discussion with the head teacher the service may issue a HOLPOL1 letter (EW24) warning the family that any future unauthorised holidays in term time may result in a penalty notice being issued. If the holiday not been authorised but is outside the terms of the policy the service may decide to take no further action against the family and HOLPOL3 letter (EW26) will be sent to the Head Teacher.
- 11.6 **When the decision is made not to grant a holiday in term time and it is still taken or the holiday is taken without prior approval then the penalty notice should normally be issued.**