



London Borough of Havering

# ENGAYNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mrs S Sankey: Headteacher

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September 2013

Dear Parents,

## **New regulations regarding leave of absence in term time**

We wanted to draw your attention to the new regulations regarding any leave of absence in term time. As from September 2013, **schools cannot authorise any leave of absence during term time** unless they deem it to be an exceptional circumstance.

**We define the term “exceptional” as an occasion that cannot be planned for**, so we are afraid that anything that can be planned e.g. all family holidays, weddings, family birthday parties or surprise trips booked by relatives etc. **will not be authorised from now on**. We realise that extended family will sometimes arrange events and it will be out of your control, but we cannot authorise any child’s absence now.

We would still appreciate knowing if your child is going to be away for any reason. If your child is absent from school and we cannot contact parents, the child may be registered as ‘missing’ which alerts all sorts of agencies, or we may include the child in a school event that they can’t attend. We would much rather parents continued to be honest. Should parents be tempted to call their child in sick when they are in fact going on holiday or needing a day’s absence for another reason, we will have no option but to refer the case to Educational Welfare where a fine may still be imposed.

**‘If the absence is not authorised and leave is taken, the case may be referred to the Education Welfare Service who may issue a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.’**

**Parents should not normally take their children on holiday in term time.**

**There is no legal right to do so.**

If you believe that your case may be deemed as “exceptional”, please fill in a leave of absence form as you have done in the past. These are available from the school office. It is vital that you include evidence with your application. Without evidence, your request will be refused.

For example:

- if the child is taking an exam in music or dance or is attending a sporting event where they are representing the county we would need to see official evidence of the date and time the child is required to be there.

**We will still be taking the child’s attendance into account and it will need to be at least 90% for authorisation to be granted.**

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There are details of the new regulations on the Department for Education website so please do visit [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk). It clearly explains the requirements and where fines might be incurred.

We are aware that these new rules will mean a big change in policy. Thank you, in advance, for your understanding and support.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs S. Sankey  
Headteacher



Mrs M. Shipton  
Deputy Headteacher