



Straw Barn
Barton Lane
Shillingford Abbot
EX2 9QQ

Tel: (01392) 832632
admin@theoutdoorsschool.co.uk

18th September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

Re: Holidays and Avoidable Absences in Term Time

Following Government legislation we are now no longer allowed to authorise holiday requests, but as we are an Independent Special School, we will look at each request, provided that it has been submitted to us on the form attached, at least two weeks in advance. Please see the Government Legislation below.

We believe that in order for a learner to fully benefit from their education, good attendance is crucial. It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement, and full attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career.

In September 2013, an amendment to the Education (Learner Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 came into force and greater clarity was introduced to the issue of schools authorising absence requests. In addition, on 19 August 2024, an amendment to the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 came into force and set out a new National Framework for issuing penalty notices. These changes reinforced the Government's view that every minute of every school day is vital and that learners should only be granted authorised absences by the school in 'exceptional circumstances.'

A family holiday is not normally considered by the Government to be an 'exceptional circumstance' and therefore will not be authorised by UK schools.

I must take this opportunity to remind you, that should you choose to take your child out of school without the authorisation of the school, then Parental Responsibility Measures could be instigated.

Schools are required to notify the Local Authority if a learner has a number of unauthorised absences. Unauthorised absences can be acquired when;

- 1) Leave has been requested, but the circumstances are such that the school is unable to authorise the leave, and it is taken anyway.
- 2) Leave is not requested and/or the school has grounds to believe that the child has been taken out of school for an avoidable reason (example – a family holiday). Only the Head teacher can authorise an absence. This year there have been occasions when schools have been notified that the learner is sick, but the school later discovers and reasonably believes that the reason given for the absence is not genuine.
- 3) A child continually arrives late after the registration period has closed.

This school will be notifying the Local Authority in all of the circumstances listed above.



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We understand the disappointment that the refusal of a leave request may cause, and we apologise, but as you can appreciate this policy represents the school's responsibility and commitment towards providing your child's education and supporting their future life opportunities. We hope you will support us by ensuring that your son/daughter obtains the maximum benefit from their time at school by attending punctually for the 190 days each year that the law requires (unless prevented from doing so by an unavoidable circumstances).

Thank you for your anticipated support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'R. Jones'.

Head Teacher

