

Dear Parent/Guardian

RE HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

Following recent Government legislation relating to pupil absence (Statutory Instrument 2006.No 1751), and a recent meeting with the Education Welfare Service, the Governing Council have been required to update the Academy's policy regarding holidays during term time.

All schools have been set a target of at least 95% attendance for this year. Attendance in all Immingham Schools is falling below the expected target. Therefore, we have come to a common agreement endorsed by each school's Council/Governing Body. You may not realise that a pupil who is out of school for 10 days in an academic year will only attain 94.7 % attendance.

In the past you may have taken your child out of school during term time for a holiday or for reasons other than illness. The Councillors/Governors are obliged to inform you of changes to the Academy's attendance policy from **1st September 2008**.

All applications for leave of absence (for any reason) should be made in advance by the parent/carer to the Principal. All requests for absence will be treated on a case by case basis, giving us the flexibility to respond to difficult specific circumstances. We are advised that parents should understand they have no legal right to time off school for family holidays and permission will only be granted in exceptional circumstances as outlined below.

The Education Welfare Service will be informed of any days where:

- leave has not been granted and parents still take a child on holiday
 - a holiday is taken without requesting leave of absence
- days in excess of any permitted leave are taken

Options open to the Education Welfare Service include:

- the implementation of the Fast Track Procedure, which commences with a School Attendance Panel Meeting, and could lead to prosecution, under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 a Penalty Notice (£50, rising to £100 if not paid within 28 days, leading to prosecution if not paid within 42 days) for each child in the family for each parent e.g. mum with 2 children- £100, mum and dad with 2 children - £100 for mum and £100 for dad.

You may be invited into the Academy to discuss your request and the Academy will respond in writing to all requests for leave of absence, giving the reasons for the decision and will take into account:

- the amount of time requested
- the age of the pupil
- the pupil's attendance record
- the proximity of SATs/G.C.S.E's/Modular Science examinations/Coursework.

Please note that all students from Yr7 to Yr13 take part in formal examination assessments.

- the pupil's ability to catch up missed work
- the pupil's educational needs and general welfare
- the circumstances of the request
- the frequency of the activity
- when the request was made.

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With regard to holidays during term time, the Department for Schools and Families (DCSF) guidelines that permit up to 10 days “holiday leave” include the following **special** circumstances:

- Service personnel and other employees prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education
- when a family need time together during or after a ‘crisis’.

Designated holiday by an employer (with written confirmation by the Personnel Department/ Human Resources Department that holidays cannot be taken at any other time)

The DCSF guidelines specifically state that holidays taken for the following reasons should **not** be authorised:

- availability of cheap holidays
 - availability of desired accommodation
 - poor weather in school holidays
- overlap with beginning or end of term.

The Councillors of the Academy, many of whom are parents at the school, are aware of the effect holidays taken in term time are having on overall attendance and, potentially, the achievement of pupils. We would urge your support in this matter and ask you not to take your child out of school for any reason, except the most exceptional of circumstances.

Yours Sincerely

Mr B. Dixon
Principal.