

**Weston Primary School**

**Holidays in Term Time**

2022

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| Approved by Governing Body: | 9th November 2022 |
| Next review due: | November 2024 |

# **Aims**

The aim of this policy is to set out the way in which Weston Primary School monitors and promotes the attendance and punctuality of its pupils. Weston Primary School is committed to maximising the potential of every child and good attendance and punctuality are essential to this aim. We feel this will be achieved, with the support of parents / carers by ensuring that holidays are not taken in school time. Absence during term time for any reasons interrupts the continuity of teaching and learning and disrupts the educational progress of pupils.

# **The Law**

The Education (Schools and Further Education) Regulations 1981 gives schools the discretionary power to grant leave for the purpose of an annual holiday during term time. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 clarifies that the granting of a term time holiday (of up to ten days) is subject to the “special circumstances” of the request. Requests for holidays in term time exceeding ten days are only to be granted in “exceptional circumstances”.

# **Holidays taken in term time**

Weston Primary School will not grant permission for holidays or extended leave to be taken in term time and discourage parents/carers making an application for term time holidays/extended leave except in “special or exceptional circumstances”.

Weston Primary School will not grant permission for holidays to be taken in term time:

* During transition time when a pupil is settling into school
* During preparation time for examinations (SATs)
* During school and pupil examination periods
* When the pupil’s attendance has been below 95% for the previous 38 weeks
* The pupils already has unauthorised absence

Special and exceptional circumstances

The Head Teacher or person designated by the Head Teacher may consider that the following circumstances are “special” or “exceptional”.

* To allow a pupil to return to their country of origin for family, religious or cultural reasons
* A family member is seriously ill.
* A wedding in which the child is playing a part

However

* Availability of “cheap” holidays
* Availability of desired accommodation
* Grandparents/relatives booking surprise holidays
* The prospect of better weather would not be considered as “special” or “exceptional” circumstances.

# **Additional Information**

Weston Primary School will ensure that all parents/carers receive a copy of this Holiday in Term Time Policy which forms part of the school attendance policy.

* Parents / carers will be required to complete a holiday request form available from the school office and return it to school before booking a term time holiday at least 6 weeks prior to the proposed date of the holiday.
* Parents/carers may be required to attend an interview with to discuss their request for a term time holiday.
* Parents/carers will normally be notified of the outcome of their application for a holiday in term time within 10 school days of the date of the application.

When a holiday in term time is agreed by the school, the absence will be recorded as ’H’ on the school attendance register. This will mean that the absence has been recorded as authorised absence on the school attendance register.

If the holiday in term time is not agreed by the school, but the pupil is absent on the requested dates, the absence will be recorded as ‘G’ (family holiday not agreed) this will mean that the absence has been recorded on the school attendance register as unauthorised.

Where a pupil is taken out of school for the purpose of a holiday in term time without the prior permission of the school for over 5 days, the parent / carer of the pupil may be issued with a £60.00 Penalty Notice per parent per child. If the notice remains unpaid after 28 days the penalty increases to £120.00. If the notice remains unpaid after 42 days the Local Authority will commence proceedings under section 444(1) of the 1996 Education Act in the Magistrates Court.

This policy after consultation with parents/carers and Governors will form part of Weston Primary Schools Attendance Policy.

# **Extended Leave**

Where in “exceptional” circumstances family holidays in term time is agreed for a period of more than 10 school days, the school will require that a return date is agreed by the parent / carer prior to the commencement of the extended leave. If the pupil fails to return by the agree date, the pupil may be taken off the school admission and attendance registers.

**Appendix 1**

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Dear Parent / Carer

Regular school attendance is essential to enable your child/children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Interruptions in school attendance means that your child/children may need to catch up on missed work and it can also affect their social life within school.

It is the school’s responsibility to provide the best education possible. We can only do this if your child/children attend regularly.

In recent years there have been increasing requests for holidays in term time as parents and carers believe that pupils are automatically allowed 10 days holiday from school in any one year.

The Government’s guidance states that under **special/exceptional circumstances** the Head Teacher **may** consider giving permission for a child to be absent from school for a maximum of 10 days in any one school year.

In line with national and local guidance I would like to outline clearly that Weston Primary School will not normally grant permission for term time holidays and will not grant permission:

* During transition time when a pupil is settling into school.
* During preparation time for examinations (SATs)
* During school and public examination periods
* When the pupil’s attendance has been below 95% for the previous 38 weeks.
* The pupil already has unauthorised absence.

Additionally

* All requests for leave in term time must be in writing on the Holiday Request Form available from the school. The request should be made before any holiday is booked and at least 6 weeks before the proposed date of the holiday.
* The granting of absence does not set a precedent for similar future requests and the frequency/duration of such leave periods will be considered as factors in any decision.
* Requests will be considered by the (*person designated)*
* Any approved extended leave must be subject to a contract/agreement between parents/carers and the school stating what leave has been granted and the pupil’s date of return to school.
* The Local Authority will use the full range of sanctions where holidays are taken without the permission of the school.

**Appendix 2**

Dear

I regret to inform you that the holiday dates you have requested for (Child’s name) will be marked as an unauthorised absence as I am unable to agree to holidays in term time.

Whilst I understand that you may be disappointed by my decision, I trust that you understand that it has been taken with the child’s best interest in mind.

I would remind you that I am required to inform the Education Welfare Service of any periods of unauthorised absence from school. The Education Welfare Service will then consider if any legal action or the issue of a Penalty Notice is appropriate.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Pitt

Interim Headteacher

Dear

Thank you for your holiday permission form dated ??.

I have granted permission for ?? holiday to be recorded as `authorised’ as this is an exceptional circumstance.

I hope you have a very enjoyable time.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Pitt

Interim Headteacher

**Appendix 3**

**HOME-SCHOOL CONTRACT**

For pupil absence during Term Time

**This contract is an agreement between**  the parents/carers of

 and school

Weston Primary School have exceptionally agreed that your child/ren may be absent from school for extended leave for the purpose of from

to

The granting of this period of leave does not set any precedent for future applications.

It is also understood that if he/she does not return by the agreed date without justifiable cause the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Parent / carer signature: …………………………………………………………..

Date: ………………………………………………….

Head Teacher’s Signature: …………………………………………………………

Date: ………………………………………………….

**Appendix 4**



  **HOLIDAY REQUEST FORM**

**WESTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

A request for absence MUST be made at least a minimum of six weeks before the trip and before the holiday is booked.

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| --- |
| **PUPIL DETAILS** |
| **Name:** |  | **Date of Birth:** |  |
| **Class / teacher**  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Date of requested absence:**  |
| **Date of return to school:** |
| **Reason for request for a holiday in term time:** |

|  |
| --- |
| I understand that keeping my child off school if my request is not granted, will result in the absence being recorded as Unauthorised. This may result in a Penalty notice being issued to me by the Local Authority for the non-attendance of my child at school: |
| **Parent / Carer Name:** |  |
| **Signature:** |  |
| **Date of request:** |  |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **OFFICE USE** |  |
| **% attendance so** **far this year:** |  | **Permission GRANTED / DECLINED** |
| **Explanation:** |  |
|  |
|  |
| **Authorised by:** |  | **Date:**  |  |
|  |