

Guidance for parents on pupil attendance and leave of absence

Parents are asked to consider very carefully the implications for their own child and others before making a decision to remove their child from the education that is provided in school in term time. Children should only be removed in exceptional circumstances. These circumstances and the factors to be taken into account by parents in considering such absence are given overleaf. If you intend to take your child out of school, please complete the form overleaf, giving as much notice as possible.

The school is required to record all absences as Authorised or Unauthorised. The decision is based on the information given below. Should a parent who is considering taking their child out of school wish to discuss the implications please contact the school office to make an appointment to see the Headteacher.

We recognise that there are some genuine difficulties and tensions for parents when they make a decision to take their child out of school.

The following information is offered to help:

Why keep your child in school?

Some areas to consider:

- Children have a right to the education that is planned and provided by school.
- Taking a child out of school is disruptive to the child concerned both at the time, before and after the event.
- Absence may be disruptive to others in the class.
- Children away from school miss the scheduled work. The learning experiences cannot be packaged and sent home and are part of ongoing work. For this reason children may not be able to maintain progress. Groupings may need to be changed as a result.
- Confidence and self-esteem may be damaged as the child no longer feels part of the class and the learning situation has moved forward without them.
- A high number of absences in a class impact on the general level and pace of learning. Teaching may need to be adjusted for the whole class as foundations for the next stage may have been undermined.
- Taking children out of school conveys a hidden message about values that are placed on education: a holiday /special occasion is more important than the learning taking place in school. This attitude may be adopted by the child.

Why take your child out of school?

There may be genuinely exceptional reasons for taking a child out of school as listed overleaf. School policy is that absence for other reasons is not authorised.

If, after taking all the factors above into account, parents decide to take their child out of school for other than exceptional reasons as described, the parents should take responsibility for this decision and appreciate that their child's absence shall be regarded as Unauthorised.

As a school we seek to provide the very best learning experiences for your children and this principle is behind our views on time out of school. We hope this is helpful and I am very happy to discuss individual circumstances with you.

Benedict O'Shea

Headteacher