

Parent/Guardian

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Our ref: IC/WSD
Date: 10 September 2008

Dear Parent/Guardian

TERM-TIME ABSENCES

Most parents support and encourage their children to attend school regularly. Unfortunately this is not always the case, and we do need more support from all parents and carers in encouraging children to do so.

Currently, children in Kent schools are absent from school on average for one half day every two weeks. If children are ill or there are other good reasons for their absence then this may be acceptable. However, parents should know that not only does a long period, or frequent short pattern of absence have serious effects on children's education, it may also lead (in extreme cases) to legal action being taken against them.

Both the Department for Children, Schools and Families and Kent Local Authority strongly discourages the removal of a child from school during term-time for **any** reason including family holidays. Absenteeism not only affects the continuity of your child's education, causing extra effort on the part of teacher and pupil to catch up on missed work, but also risks underachievement for your child. Schools provide parents and guardians with a timetable of term dates, in-service training days and key dates for tests and examinations which should enable the planning of holidays and events out of school time. These timetables are available from your child's school office.

Absence during term time is not a right, and there are clear procedures to follow should you wish to request permission for this, including time for a family holiday. The school requires at least two weeks' notice as the absence **must** be authorised by the head teacher or school governing body which have the power to agree or refuse the request. No more than ten school days' absence per academic year for a family holiday during term time may be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.

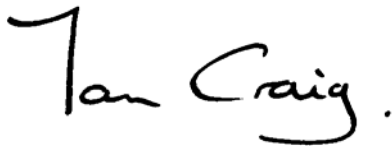
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Schools will consider each request for holiday absence individually. If permission is refused and the parent or carer proceeds with the holiday, the absence is recorded as unauthorised. The school may then submit a request to issue a Penalty Notice. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 42 day period could result in prosecution by the LA.

If an absence is agreed then it is vital that your child returns to school promptly afterwards. Where a pupil fails to return within 10 days of the agreed return date and there is no valid reason for this, the school may remove his or her name from the school roll, leaving the child without a school place.

We understand that occasionally absences will be inevitable but hope that, with your help, we can keep these to a minimum in order to maintain a high standard of continuous education for your child.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Craig." The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Dr Ian Craig
Director (Operations)