

CARNAGILL COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Holidays in Term Times

**Aims**

The aim of this policy is to minimise the amount of time lost to term-time holidays in order to maximise the educational potential of every child. This can be achieved with the support of parents/carers by ensuring holidays are not taken in school time unless there are exceptional circumstances. There are 175 days each year when your child is not in school. Absence for any reason during term time interrupts a child's education and disrupts educational progress.

**Regulations and Guidance**

Important government changes to legislation regarding leave of absence from school during term time came into force on the 1st September 2013.

The new law says that parents/carers do not have the right to take their child/ren out of school for a holiday during term time.

The Headteacher will only be able to grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and this will be at her discretion. No parent/carer can demand leave of absence as of right. The Education Regulations state that applications must be made in advance by a parent/carer with whom the child lives and can only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances. Each leave application is considered individually by the school taking into account any factors presented by the family. Application forms are available from the school office.

The following are examples of the criteria for leave of absence, which may be considered as 'exceptional':

- Service personnel returning from active deployment
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the production or confirmation from the organisation/company
- Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

This is not an exhaustive list and the Headteacher will consider the individual circumstances of each case when making a decision on this matter. Where the headteacher feels that there may be exceptional circumstances which do not fit the criteria, they may refer to the local authority for advice. The decision of the Headteacher is, however, final. Please note that the ability to access a reduced cost of a holiday does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Where a child is taken out of school for the purpose of leave of absence in term time without the permission of the school, the absence will be coded as unauthorised and as

such may result in a Penalty Notice. Penalties are applied by the Local Authority and as such are not at the discretion of the headteacher. If a Penalty Notice is not paid, the matter may be taken to prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Amendments to 2007 Penalty Notice regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1st September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices in line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecution if the fine is not paid.

Requests for holidays in term times must be made 6 weeks prior to the holiday and in writing on the holiday request form, which is available from the school office. It is strongly advised that you do not book your holiday until approval has been given.

If the holiday in term time is agreed it will be recorded as 'H' on the school attendance register (authorised absence).

If the school does not agree to grant the leave for the holiday and the parents/carers take their child/ren on holiday then this will be recorded as unauthorised 'G' (family holiday not agreed).

Should the child fail to return to school within 10 school days of the agreed return date and there is not communication from parents/carers the school may remove the child from the school roll.

September 2013