



From the Governing Body Dec 1st 2010

Dear Parents

Re: Holidays in term time and unauthorised absence

The Governors have previously informed parents, guardians and carers of Spaldwick school children of the Local Authority and national advice on family holidays during term time. As you can see from the attendance figures below, the school's absence figure has reduced. The Local Authority continues to monitor the school's attendance data.

2005-06 Absence level 6.1% 2007-08 3.8% 2008-09 3.6% 2009-10 3.9%

The Governors understand that the many of the authorised absences are due to pupil illness, and do not wish parents to feel that they are expected to ask their ill child to attend school.

The Governors would like to draw the parents attention to the School policy on absences

- Term time holidays will not be authorised other than exceptional circumstances. They are not an entitlement.
- More economic holidays in term time are not considered to be exceptional circumstance.
- An exceptional circumstance is likely to be a one off situation, such as a family trauma or bereavement.
- A child's overall attendance record will be taken into consideration, even when illness has affected this. Exceptional circumstance leave will not be granted if an attendance record of at least 95% has been achieved.
- Parents seeking permission for an absence must complete an absence request form. .
- Should a pupil be taken out of school during term time without the head teacher's permission, the absence will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer. There are regular attendance register checks completed by the EWO as a matter of course.
- Should a child fail to return to school within 10 school days of an agreed date, the school may remove the child's name from the school roll.

The Local Authority are asking schools to remind parents that under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, they have a legal obligation to ensure regular attendance of their child at school where he/she is a registered pupil. Failure to fulfil this duty may result in the Local Authority prosecuting parents. Local Authority prosecutions could result in parental fines up to £2500, and/or up to three months imprisonment.

We would also like to remind parents of the impact in the classroom of withdrawing children for term time holidays.

Did you know that

- A significant and disproportionate amount of teacher's time is taken from the class while they work with children who have missed important steps.
- Over 50% of curriculum time is spent on the core subjects of literacy and numeracy
- If a child is absent for one week, 5 hours of numeracy and 5 hours of literacy, plus reading sessions will be missed.
- Work missed cannot be covered again by the teacher.
- Links that are missed will affect future learning and may lead to confusion.

We do hope you will continue to support the school and the Governors and follow the advice. This will ensure we continue to work together to improve the school attendance record.

Yours sincerely



Mr Paul O'Neill [Chair of Governors.

