



Oaklands Schools



Oaklands
Infant School

Oaklands
Junior School

November 2013

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Leave of Absence during term time - Fixed Penalty Notices

There is much research that demonstrates the link between regular attendance at school and academic achievement. Currently, the Governing Bodies of Oaklands Infant and Junior Schools do not authorise family holidays in term time unless there are truly exceptional circumstances. Each case is considered on an individual basis and where there are children in both schools, the Headteachers will liaise. This will not change and as a policy has been in place for a number of years now.

What is changing is the implementation of Fixed Penalty Notices by the Education Welfare Service for unauthorised absences from school. A copy of the Wokingham Borough Council Code of Conduct which lays out the rationale behind this and the process that will be followed can be found on the school websites under 'About Us' tab/policies on the Infant School website and 'Information' tab/School Policies on the Junior School website. In order to give parents plenty of notice (and re-arrange holidays if necessary) this will be implemented for holidays taken from 24th February 2014 onwards. In order to give time for this process, applications for leave of absence must be received by the school at least 4 weeks prior to the beginning of the proposed absence.

We strongly recommend you read the Code of Conduct carefully, but the main points are summarised below:

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence
- They will be considered appropriate in the following circumstances:
 - overt truancy
 - unauthorised holidays in term time – 5 days or more during the academic year
 - excessive delayed return from extended holidays without prior school agreement ie 2 days
 - persistent late arrival at school ie 15 occasions in a half term period
 - less than 80% attendance, the absence being unauthorised, during a 4 week period.
- The amount payable is £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 days of receipt of notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days, but within 28 days
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority is then obliged to prosecute for failing to pay.



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Attached to this letter is a flow chart showing the process. A copy of both schools' Attendance Policies can also be found on the websites/Learning Platforms under 'About Us' tab on the Infant School website and 'Information' tab on the Junior School website.

For further information about school attendance, please see the Department of Education (DfE) website: www.education.gov.uk – 'school attendance' is currently a popular search on the right hand side of the page.

Yours sincerely

Handwritten signature of J Sheppard in black ink.

J Sheppard
Headteacher Oaklands Infant School

Handwritten signature of S.M. Charnley in black ink.

S Charnley
Headteacher Oaklands Junior School

Handwritten signature of Carolyn Elliott in black ink.

Carolyn Elliott
Chair of Infant School Governors

Handwritten signature of John McLaren in black ink.

John McLaren
Chair of Junior School Governors