



PRIESTLEY SMITH SPECIALIST SCHOOL

(For Blind and Partially Sighted Students)

Beeches Campus, Beeches Road, Great Barr, Birmingham B42 2PY

Telephone: 0121 325 3900 Facsimile: 0121 325 3902

E-mail: enquiry@priestley.bham.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs J. L. Garvey



Dear Parents / Carers,

I would like to clarify the school's position regarding holiday or leave of absence in term time.

Authorising absence is a policy decision. I have to work within the policy adopted by the Local Authority and school. All school absence is a serious matter monitored by the LA, Education Welfare department and Ofsted and all school procedures are checked regularly.

We acknowledge Covid has caused huge disruption with cancelled holidays being rebooked. However, moving forward from September 2022 holidays are **NOT** permitted in term time. Requesting holidays because it is cheaper to go in term time is not a valid reason, neither are celebrations abroad considered a necessity.

Holidays should be taken in holiday time of which we have plenty of weeks available. These include 1 week Autumn half term, 2 weeks Christmas, 1 week Spring half term, 2 weeks Easter, 1 week Summer half term and 6 weeks in the summer.

Taking holidays in term time mean children quickly fall behind with their work and may require extra support to catch up.

Parents/ carers taking holidays without discussing it first or informing the school in advance will result in fixed penalty fines being issued by the Local Authority to parents/carers of children of statutory school age. If we are not informed where a child is in school time the child is classed as missing. For those pupils in sixth form breaching the attendance regulations, parents/carers will be required to meet with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors to discuss their place in the sixth form.

Parents/carers may request leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. A form needs to be filled out and submitted to the Headteacher with as much notice as possible. A response will be given.

Permission for a request of leave of absence will only be considered where the child:

- a) Has attendance of 96% or above at that time.
- b) Is not likely to fall behind with their work.
- c) Has not requested any other leave of absence that year.
- d) There is an acceptable exceptional reason for this request.
- e) Does not have any statutory tests at that time.

In addition to holiday absence we have a very small number of children who persistently have time off. If a child's attendance falls below 80% the education welfare team will be notified and an Early Help may be opened. Parents may also be subject to a penalty fine.

I hope this explains how the school will deal with requests for leave and any holidays taken in term time.

Kind regards,

Joanna Garvey,
Headteacher,

Priestley Smith Specialist School.