



St Edmund's and St Joseph's Catholic Primary Schools



Executive Headteacher: Maria Kemble
Chair of Governors: Dr Christopher Oldroyd

Westgate Street, Bury St Edmunds,
Suffolk, IP33 1QG
Tel: 01284 755141
Email: office@st-edmunds.suffolk.sch.uk

*"We learn together in God's love by
encouraging and supporting one another."*

Beaconsfield Road, Sudbury,
Suffolk, CO10 1JP
Tel: 01787 373365
Email: admin@st-josephs.suffolk.sch.uk

9th May 2024

Dear Parents

RE: Absence and Holidays during term time

We wish to work with you to support high levels of attendance and thought it would be helpful to clarify the procedures with regard to notifying the school of absence and in particular, requesting holidays during term time. The authorisation of absence is by the school and there are limited circumstances in which absence can be authorised. When you notify the school of your child's absence it is not automatically authorised. For absence due to illness, please call the office and use the dedicated absence message line to leave details of your child and reason for absence. If we do not hear from you by 9.30am, we will make contact via text to check the reason for your child's absence. When children are not well enough to attend school, their absence is authorised. Routine appointments for dentists, opticians or doctors should be made during the school holidays or after school wherever possible. If you have to take your child during school time, please let the office see the appointment card (or notification if electronic) preferably in advance. These appointments will be authorised if an appointment card is provided.

Holidays cannot be routinely authorised and Government guidance is that the use of penalty notices is expected. It would be beneficial if parents could discuss their intentions to take their child on holiday in advance prior to booking, so that the circumstances are fully understood by the school and the impact on the child's learning can be discussed. In this way it may be possible to reduce the negative impact of absence by avoiding holidays at critical times. I appreciate that for many families the cost of holidays during term time is significantly cheaper. Unfortunately, this is not sufficient reason for them to be authorised.

Absence for events such as birthdays cannot be authorised. However, some one-off events would come under exceptional circumstances and can be authorised – e.g. religious observance; graduation ceremony; funerals. If you are unsure if the event would fall into this category, please discuss it with myself or Mrs Copeman.

Absences are monitored by the Local Authority on a regular basis and further action may be taken if there is a pattern of absence e.g. always absent on Monday or if attendance falls below 90%. Attendance below 90% is categorised a persistent absence and would be supported by the Educational Welfare Officer meeting with parents to find out if there are issues which are causing the absence. This may identify ways to support your child and family to improve attendance.

Yours sincerely

Maria Kemble

Mrs M Kemble
Executive Head



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