

Email sent 27 May 2016 13:15

Important Information on Attendance

Dear Parents,

The sometimes contentious issue of term-time holidays has featured quite prominently in the media over recent weeks. We are rightfully very proud of our very high attendance figures at Holy Family as that is due to the excellent working partnership and mutual trust and respect we enjoy with parents. Our unity and commitment makes this school special. Over the last 12 months I have been talking regularly to your reps on the parent steering group about the need to avoid term-time holiday requests wherever possible however, during this academic year, the number of requests have increased significantly. The governing body have also been involved throughout the year in on-going discussions about our policy and procedures regarding attendance and, together with input from the Educational Welfare Officer, have been monitoring the situation very closely.

In recent weeks we have received several requests for extended holidays during term time therefore the governing body have reviewed and revised the policy for attendance & term-time holiday requests. This represents a more rigorous stance and approach to absence in term time. We are proud that the vast majority of parents work very closely with the school to ensure your children attend regularly and we do not wish to 'punish' the majority however we are sure you will agree that we need to ensure our policies, expectations and procedures apply to everyone.

Please look at the revised attendance policy which can be found on our website www.holy-family.surrey.sch.uk under School Information / Attendance and the attached school statement on the importance of attendance. In addition there is a new request for absence form 'Application for Exceptional Circumstances Absence'. These documents are effective immediately and all holiday requests that have been submitted recently, and not yet approved, will be assessed against the new policy. Any holiday requests for the forthcoming year will also need to be re-submitted if no written approval has yet been given for these. A revised form to request absence has been devised and this can be found at the back of the policy.

As always, we remain a family school and care deeply about our families however we are also professionally responsible for ensuring children attend school during term time. Please be reassured that you can always talk to the school about circumstances which may require term-time absence. We will always listen and support families in the best way we can and every request will be assessed with consideration and compassion.

Mr Tindall