



Changes to Government Attendance Guidelines September 2013

The Government has introduced some significant changes to attendance regulations for pupils at school as from 1st September 2013. The most important of these is in relation to term-time family holidays. Below is a quotation directly from the Department of Education Circular.

“Amendments to 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Head teachers **may not** grant **any** leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances.”

“Henceforth, all holidays will be marked as **unauthorised** and could be subject to a fine of up to £60 if paid in 21 days or £120 if paid in 28 days.

Parents are still allowed to take their children out of school for “**exceptional circumstances**” such as weddings, funerals and other family events which are not deemed to be “holidays” at the discretion of the head teacher.”

At the Willows school, we will interpret “exceptional” in this context as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time. We will deal with each case individually when making decisions.

We request that you respect these new regulations under which we must now work. If you do need to take your child out of school during term time, you must make it very clear in your request how the circumstances are exceptional. We will then decide whether the request can be authorised.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Orbell

Head Teacher