

Springcroft Primary School

Grindley Lane
Blythe Bridge
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST11 9JS
Tel: 01782 394793
Email: office@springcroft.staffs.sch.uk



Thursday 19th April 2018

Changes to Leave of Absence from School

Dear Parents,

In light of the Isle of Wight court case and the subsequent Supreme Court ruling on school absences, I write to clarify Staffordshire County Councils position for parents where there may be the potential for any ambiguity and to also ensure we are fully compliant with legal requirements.

As a result of the Supreme Court ruling, Springcroft have made a few changes to our previous guidance to schools, parents and carers regarding absence from school. The new guidance will come into force from 1st September 2018.

Parents who want the school to consider granting leave of absence in school term time should complete the Leave of Absence Request Form (a copy is on the reverse of this letter) and send it to the Headteacher. This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered at least two weeks prior to the desired period of absence. Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the school's decision regarding their request. Headteachers cannot authorise any leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins.

The Department for Education makes it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers now also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Examples of exceptional circumstance maybe:

- Religious observance
- Family bereavements
- Service personnel prevented from term time holidays
- Family crisis/serious issues meaning family needs to spend time together
- Certain exams and recognised short time sporting/cultural activities (evidence needed)

Points to remember

- The Government has made it clear that parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw their child from school during term time
- The Government has made it clear that Headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise term time absence, unless it is due to exceptional circumstances
- Taking a pupil out of school during term time disrupts their learning and may cause them to fall behind their peers. Absence can also affect a child's relationships with others
- Term time breaks when added to unpredictable absences e.g. for medical reasons all add up. Learning time lost from school cannot be replaced!
- If the absence is not authorised and the holiday / time is taken anyway, the case maybe referred to the Education Welfare Services who may issue a penalty notice to each parent for each child taken out of school

I very much hope that the above will be for information only. I recognise that parents work hard to ensure that their child/children attend Springcroft on a regular basis, and as always, we appreciate your support.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "S Drew", written over a white background.

Mr S Drew
Headteacher



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Leave of Absence Request Form

We want all of our pupils in school for as much time as possible in order to maximise their learning time and opportunities. We strongly discourage term time breaks and holidays and we ask parents not to request them unless they are for truly exceptional circumstances (see below).

Points to remember

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Each request will be considered by the Headteacher. Term time holidays because they are cheaper out of school holiday term do not constitute exceptional circumstances and will not be authorised.

Absence forms are not needed for illness - usual procedures should be followed

Name of child	
Class	
First day of Absence	
Date of Return	
Number of Days requested	
Has leave of absence been requested in term time before?	<i>Please give details</i>
Details of the exceptional reasons for this request	<i>Please give details</i>

A separate form should be completed for each child requesting an absence

Signed : _____ Name : _____ Date: _____

Please give at least two week's notice of absence requests. Please return this form in an envelope marked for the attention of the Headteacher. We will then send out a letter authorising, or not, the absence request.

