

Dear parent/carer,

Holidays during term-time – important information

As many of you are now aware, the government implemented new legislation effective from

1st September 2013 which means that no requests for holidays can be authorised except in exceptional circumstances. Guidelines as to what can be defined as exceptional circumstances are:

1. Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specified time in the year and there is no opportunity for a family holiday in school holidays. This must be supported by documentary evidence from the organisation.
2. Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
3. Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. Evidence must be provided, from qualified professionals such as a doctor.

When a parent/carer wishes to apply to take their child out of the academy during term time they must complete a Leave of Absence Form and this should be submitted to the academy **at least 4 weeks** before the proposed start of the holiday and preferably before booking the holiday.

If you take your child on holiday during term time, without the authorisation of the academy a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, the penalty is £60 per child, per parent/carer when the payment is made within 21 days, after 28 days it will increase to £120. Failure to pay within 42 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that the parent/carer has failed to secure their child's regular attendance at the academy. Please note that a separate Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child and all monies are payable to the Local Authority.

Procedures for applying

Leave of Absence forms are available from the Attendance Office or alternatively can be downloaded from the academy's website. They should then be returned to the Attendance Office or emailed directly to ccoupe@queenelizabeths-ac.org.uk

The exceptional circumstances to explain why the holiday must be taken during term time should be clearly stated.

The Principal will decide whether the holiday can be authorised and the academy will contact the parent/carer to inform them of the outcome.

A parent/carer may appeal in writing to the Principal, who has the final authority.

Even when there are exceptional circumstances, no holiday requests will be granted during and period of exams.

Consequences of taking an unauthorised holiday

Taking a holiday without authorisation will have an impact on a child's learning. Parents who choose to take an unauthorised holiday must accept that this will have an adverse effect on their child's educational achievement. The academy may therefore ask the local authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Fine where an unauthorised holiday has been taken. The Fixed Penalty Fine is collected and kept by the Local Authority, not the Academy.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances a Fixed Penalty Fine will be issued:

- a. When the holiday absence causes the child's attendance **to fall below 90% in the previous 12 months.**
- b. When there has been a previous unauthorised holiday(s) in the same academic year of 5 or more days.