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Dear Parent/Carer

The latest attendance legislation is detailed below, however, please note in addition that:

School cannot authorise absence for the treatment of head lice

We would be grateful if you could provide proof of medical appointments – please do not be offended when we ask for this.

Please telephone the school office before 9.30am if your child is going to be absent from school.

Please ensure that we have up to date contact details for all emergency contacts.

### **Amendments to School Attendance Legislation (September 2013)**

Changes to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear that Head Teachers are not able to authorise leave of absence requests during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

**IMPORTANT– Holiday requests CANNOT be authorised under any circumstances whatsoever.**

### **Requests for Leave of Absence (Exceptional Circumstances)**

The Head Teacher / Deputy are responsible for determining if requests for leave of absence during term time are classed as exceptional.

As a guideline, the Government states that the following circumstances would not generally be considered as exceptional:

- Relatives coming to visit
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad / flights
- Family day trips
- Visiting family / friends who have different half terms or holidays
- Shopping
- Birthday treats
- Availability of desired accommodation
- Poor weather experienced in school holidays

## **Requests for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances**

Where leave of absence for exceptional circumstances is requested during term time the applicant must fill out a leave of absence form as normal at least two weeks in advance, where possible.

Leave of absence requests in exceptional circumstances will be considered on an individual basis. You will also be expected to provide evidence of the exceptional circumstances, where possible, before your request will be considered. Factors which will also be taken into consideration are:-

- Your child's attendance record
- Your child's lateness record
- Timing of your request in the school year (i.e. SATS / Assessment periods)

If leave of absence is authorised then, generally, only 1 school day will be granted.

**Government guidelines state that they do not expect that exceptional circumstances would occur more than once during a child's time at Moorgate.**

## **Unauthorised Absence**

Any absence from school that the school has not permitted or cannot give permission for is classed as an **unauthorised absence**.

Please note that **persistent late arrival** at school is also classed as **unauthorised absence**.

## **Penalty Notices**

Attendance figures are monitored by the local authority who will decide on the issuing of penalty notices (fines).

Parents should be aware that 1 day of absence from school is classed as 2 sessions and that should your child accumulate **15 sessions of unauthorised absence** during a school term or be persistently late for school a formal letter of warning will be issued advising parents that a **penalty notice** (fine) may be issued. This warning letter will also include details of the child's absences. This is an opportunity for the parents to work with the school to improve the child's attendance / lateness. If there is no improvement and unauthorised sessions reach 20, a penalty notice (fine) will be issued by the Local Authority.

Please Note: If you choose to take your child on holiday during term time for 10 days ie: 20 unauthorised sessions, the Local Authority will issue a fine without any prior warning.

If you have any questions with regard to this information please do not hesitate to contact myself or Mrs Heyes, our Family Support Officer.

Thank you for your attention.

*Mrs D. Hopwood*

**Head Teacher**