

For further information please contact:

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LEAVE OF ABSENCE

**A GUIDE FOR
PARENTS & CARERS**

Introduction

This leaflet gives advice to parents and carers of school age children about requesting leave of absence to enable them to remove their child from school for a period of time.

It is well known that missing school for any reason can cause a child to fall behind in their learning. Sometimes children also find it difficult to settle back into school after a break.

In the longer term, evidence shows that reduced levels of school attendance result in lower levels of qualifications achieved at school.

Cedar Mount Academy is committed to raising the levels of achievement for all students and to ensuring that all students get the maximum benefit from their time at school.

For these reasons, Cedar Mount Academy in conjunction with Manchester City Council strongly encourages parents to take holidays with their children during the school holidays, rather than during term time. Leave of absences for any reason should only be requested in the most exceptional circumstances.

What does the law say?

It is sometimes thought that parents have a right to take children out of school for up to 10 days a year for the purpose of taking holidays. This is in fact a myth, and there never has been a right to remove children from school for the purpose of a holiday at all.

In 2013 the Government took steps to discourage holidays in term time. It passed legislation abolishing the right of schools to authorise up to 10 days a year specifically for holidays if special circumstances exist.

This means that from September 2013 leave of absence for any reason – including holidays – can only be granted if the school is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist. These requests will be looked at on a case by case basis by the Vice Principal.

Even then, school may still refuse to give permission – for example, if your child has a poor attendance record, or if the holiday is at a particularly important time, such as in the run up to exams or at the start of the new school year.

What should I do if I wish to request leave of absence?

You should contact your child's school to find out how to make a request for permission. **We strongly suggest that you do this before planning any leave of absence or booking any flights.** This request must be made to the School Attendance Officer at least 4 weeks prior to the leaving date.

Who should make the request?

The request should be made by the parent or carer with whom the child lives. This is the case even where it is another person who wishes to take the child out of school.

What happens if my child goes on holiday in term time or takes leave of absence for other reasons without permission from the school?

The absence will be marked in the school register as unauthorised absences and this may result in fixed penalty fines of £60 (rising to £120) per parent per child being issued by the Local Authority. In some cases, parents may be prosecuted for the offence of failure to ensure regular attendance at school.