

September 2013

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Term – time leave of absence

Eckington Road, Sothall
Sheffield, S20 1HQ

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email: enquiries@westfield-admin.co.uk

Headteacher Mr Andy Ireland

The Department for Education (DfE) has issued amendments to the regulations around school attendance and the taking of holidays during school term times. The full details of these amendments are on the DfE website – www.education.gov.uk and please be aware that all schools must comply with these regulations.

The DfE makes it very clear that headteachers cannot authorise any leave of absence, including term-time holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any absence without this agreement will be classed as unauthorised and would go down on the student's records. Unauthorised absences of five or more consecutive days will lead to the issuing of a fixed penalty notice regardless of the student's previous attendance record and could even lead to further prosecution. If authorised, the Headteacher is also able to set a time limit on the leave of absence.

Exceptional circumstances are described as unique or one-off events. They might include family emergencies, a sudden change in circumstances or a once-in-a lifetime opportunity. Visits from family members or opportunities for discounted holidays will not constitute as exceptional circumstances. Also, in taking any decision to authorise absence a headteacher will also take other factors into account such as a student's attendance record.

This policy is in line with Sheffield City Council guidelines and is common across the Westfield family of schools. There will also be a common leave of absence request form available in all our schools or from the websites. However, please be aware that the regulations mean that these can only be authorised in extreme circumstances

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Chipchase
Beighton Nursery Infant School

Mr M Hinchliff
Brookhouse Junior School

Mrs C Newton-Wall
Emmanuel Junior School

Mrs R Kurcewicz
Halfway Junior School

Mr S Varnham
Halfway Nursery Infant School

Ms S Lloyd
Mosborough Primary School

Mrs L O'Halloran
Reignhead Primary School

Mrs S Hearnshaw
Shortbrook Primary School

Mrs H Stokes
Waterthorpe School

Mr A Ireland
Westfield School