The Hyde School

Hyde Crescent, West Hendon, London, NW9 7EY

020 8205 8707 : office@thehydeschool.co.uk

Headteacher: Philippa Saving

Deputy Headteachers: Nisha Mehta, Spencer Guy, and Monique Grech

EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

TIME OFF SCHOOL FOR FAMILY HOLIDAYS IS NOT A RIGHT

The Hyde School, Barnet Council and The Elliot Foundation all strongly discourage absence from school unless absolutely essential, in order to maximise the learning potential of all pupils.

It is vital for parents/carers to note the following:

- Families must apply to the school in advance for permission to take their child away from school
- Families will not be granted holidays during term time
- Families applying for an 'Exceptional leave of absence' will be asked to complete a form which will be reviewed by the Headteacher who will respond in writing. This will usually be received with 5 working days
- The Head Teacher, through the governing body, will regularly communicate the school's expectations and its procedures to parents.
- The School adheres to The Elliot Foundation and Local Authority advice on managing such requests

Exceptional Leave of Absence

In **exceptional** circumstances, a request for special leave of absence may be considered by the Headteacher. Where leave is granted, the leave will be recorded as an **Exceptional Leave of Absence.** The Head Teacher may refuse the whole period requested by a pupil's parents, grant part of the period and refuse the remainder, or grant the whole of the period requested. Parents will receive a letter detailing the Headteacher's decision; this will be sent to the parent within 5 working days of the office having received the request.

The Head Teacher will have discretion to grant exceptional leave if s/he believes that the circumstances warrant it, namely:

1. for service personnel who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education;
2. for religious reasons.
3. In an extenuating and 'exceptional' circumstance which is supported by supporting documentation eg medical evidence
4. Evidence is provided to explain why it is not possible to go during a school holiday.

In additional to the criteria above, the Headteacher will also consider the following:

- The circumstances involved
- The time and length of the proposed leave
- The child/rens record of attendance - If the attendance is below 95% at the time of the request, it will be refused.
- Any previous leave of absence requests in respect of the child
- If the proposed absence is near to, or during, National Examinations

Failure to Return From Extended Leave

Where a pupil fails to return after the expected return date the Head Teacher may take steps to remove the pupil from the school roll.

1. The Head Teacher will ensure that there was no good reason for the pupil's absence, such as disrupted travel arrangements or illness, before deleting the pupil from the school roll
2. If the pupil has a good reason to be absent he/she will be marked authorised absence using the relevant code.
3. The Head Teacher and Educational Welfare Team will make reasonable enquiries to locate the pupil.
4. If the pupil is located, the school will take steps to address the reasons for the pupil's failure to attend, accessing support for other agencies where appropriate.
5. The school will delete the pupil from the school registers and transfer the pupil's information to the National Lost Pupils Database after 6 weeks.

Travellers

Travellers are recognised as a distinct ethnic minority. They move around as part of their trade or business and the children usually travel with them. *People, who are on extended holidays, including those on "world tours", are not included in the definition of travellers*. When travellers' children are unable to attend school because they are travelling the absence should be as marked authorised using Attendance Code T.
Travellers will be encouraged to access education whilst travelling and, if they attend educational provision through registration at another school or specialist provision, they can be marked as "present at approved educational activity", B.
The Head Teacher may refer such cases to the Ethnic Minority Achievement Team and Education Welfare Team for advice.

Record-keeping

The school will keep records of authorisations and refusals on file for future reference in the event of any complaint or, indeed, further applications. Reasons for the decision reached will be kept in order to ensure consistency of approach.

Fixed Penalty Notices

A Fixed Penalty Notice is a fine issued by the Local Authority to parents who take their child on holiday or out of school during term time **without the express consent of the school**. Such fines are referred to the Educational Welfare Team who may impose a fixed penalty fine of £80 per parent if paid within 21 days rising to £160 per parent for each child if paid within 28 days (Anti-social Behaviour Act 1996/2003) If the notice remains unpaid after the 28th day, the Local Authority prosecutes the parents in a Magistrates court for the original non-attendance offence under The Education Act 1996, Section 444, and not for non-payment of the penalty notice. If found guilty, parents will have a criminal record, possibly receive a fine up to £1000, for a first offence and be required to pay costs to the Local Authority. There is no right of appeal against a Fixed Penalty Notice. Absence from school is governed by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, and as amended in 2013.

Removing Your Child from the school roll

Parents who have been refused leave and who take their children on an extended trip whether that is in the UK or abroad need to be aware that the school could remove their child from the school roll and offer the school place to another child on the waiting list.

Policy Agreement Statement

I can confirm that I have read and understand the Exceptional Leave of Absence Policy.

Signed:_____ Date:_____

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APPLICATION FOR EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

As a parent/guardian you should fill in this form if you wish to take your child out of school during term time. Please note that **family holidays during term time will not** be authorised, unless there are exceptional circumstances involved.

Please refer to the Exceptional Leave of Absence Policy, on the reverse of this form, to see the full list of points that the Headteacher will consider when deciding to approve or refuse your application. The policy also details the full consequences of refused leave and failure to return from leave.

In order to process this request, you **must** read and sign the Exceptional Leave of Absence Policy. You can find the policy on the back of this form. If the policy statement is not signed, your request will be returned for you to do so.

If you take your child on leave without authorisation, the Local Authority will issue Fixed Penalty Notices of £80 per parent, per child, rising to £160 per parent, per child if not paid within 28 days. This is in accordance with **The Education (Penalty Notices England) Regulation 2013**. Failure to pay within 42 days will lead to prosecution in the Magistrates Court. There is no right of appeal against a Fixed Penalty Notice. In certain circumstances your child will be taken off roll.

I request that (child's name): _____ Class: _____

Be granted special leave of absence from: ____/____/_____ to _____/_____/_____

Reason for request: _____

_____

_____

My child will access education during their time off: Yes / No (please circle)

If you have circled 'Yes' please provide details: _____

Are both parents of the child/ children aware of this request for absence during term time? Yes / No (please circle)

Signature of Parent/ Guardian: _____ Date: ___/ ___/____

Office Use Only:

Leave Approved/ Leave Refused / Leave Partially Approved (circle as appropriate)

Signature of Head/ Deputy Head: _____ Date: ___/ ___/ ___