

January 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians/Carers

Important information – please read

Taking your children out of school for a term time holiday

From January 2011 a new system for authorising term time holidays will be in operation at The Snaith School (holidays which are already in the system will be authorised as a one off)

If you are considering taking a term time holiday, please take note of this information and **do not book your holiday before you have discussed this with Miss Hill** Deputy Headteacher.

The School policy brings us in line with The East Riding of Yorkshire's Term Time Holiday Policy.

Children who attend school regularly do better in school

Attendance at school is very important for your child's future as there is a clear link between attendance and attainment. Children who have higher levels of attendance achieve better. Even a few days absence can impact on a child's progress.

In 2007, 91 per cent of children with less than six days absence achieved at least five GCSEs. Of the children who had more than twelve days absence, only 36 per cent achieved five GCSEs.

Also in 2007, 84 per cent of children with less than six days absence achieved level 4 or above in English and Mathematics. Of the children with twelve or more days absence, only 52 per cent achieved this level.

At The Snaith School we are committed to working with all other East Riding of Yorkshire Schools and East Riding of Yorkshire Council to reduce the number of school days missed due to term time holidays. This agreement has been drawn up and published as a term time holiday policy that all headteachers shall adhere to when considering any parental requests.

The headteacher will not under any circumstance authorise holidays:

- **In the first six weeks of any academic year;**
- **Year nine options time;**
- **Any time during years ten and eleven.**

Time off school for family holidays is not a right

However, headteachers may authorise term time holidays in specific circumstances for Years 7 – 9 but will require evidence.

Circumstance 1:

When parents take their holiday in term time owing to their contractual arrangements e.g. farmers, factory workers, and tourist trade workers.

Evidence:

A letter from the employer stating this is the case.

Circumstance 2:

Where there have been medical or emotional issues involving a child or parent and a health professional has recommended that the family need rehabilitation time.

Evidence:

A letter from the medical professional stating this is their recommendation.

Circumstance 3:

Where emigration is being considered

Evidence:

Letter(s) of enquiry.

Circumstance 4:

Where the family needs to leave the area to attend the ceremony of a relative.

Evidence:

Formal invitation and/or a case put forward to the headteacher.

Without this evidence the headteacher will not authorise your request

Consequences of taking an unauthorised term time holiday

If your request is declined and you take your child out of school for ten unauthorised absence sessions, each parent within your household will be issued with a £50 penalty notice for each child taken out of school. If the penalty notice remains unpaid after 28 days, it will increase to £100. If after 42 days it remains unpaid, you will be summoned to appear before a Magistrate to explain why your child has unauthorised school absences. A fine of up to £1000 may be imposed.

A reminder about other absences.....

Every hour in school counts! We cannot emphasise enough how important it is that your child is in school for their full educational entitlement every day. In line with this, we do ask that you try to arrange any appointments after the school day. The school should be informed of all absences by a telephone call and a note in the pupil planner. All pupils should arrive on time to school. Attendance is monitored electronically in school, allowing quick and easy access to information.

Free School Meals

We are sure you have heard of the new **Pupil Premium**, announced by the Government. This is money that will be given to schools in April 2011 and we believe that the total money available (up to £450 per eligible pupil) will be based on the number of children registered for a Free School Meal. The Pupil Premium is for schools to allocate to additional resources to support the learning of all pupils.

At present there are a number of pupils in school who are eligible for free school meals but do not claim this benefit. The new Pupil Premium will be based on those pupils who are registered rather than those who take a free school meal. The extra resources this money could provide for children at The Snaith School are considerable as well as saving the family over £300 per year. If you register, The Snaith School will get the Pupil Premium.

The East Riding Council have made registering for this benefit much easier – the benefits team can process your claim by telephone as long as you tell them your name, date of birth, National Insurance number and the name and date of birth of each child attending school and which school your child(ren) attend. All you need to do is telephone 01482 394799. You will be told over the phone immediately if your child(ren) are eligible for the benefit.

If you are already getting the following benefits your child(ren) are automatically eligible for Free School Meals, all you need to do is telephone and ask the benefits team to update the records:

- Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based)
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit (but NOT receiving Working Tax Credit) – provided your annual income, assessed by the Inland Revenue, does not exceed £16,190 (Please note: This amount is subject to change in April every year).
- Employment Support Allowance (Income Related)
- Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Yours sincerely

J D Pickerill
Headteacher