

This policy will be ratified by governors on 21st November, 2016.

Attendance and Holiday Information

Please find attached the term dates and school holiday dates for next September 2015 - July 2016.

Thank you to all parents for your continued support of the school. I know that you support us in many ways and one of the most important is ensuring that your child has excellent school attendance which means being here punctually every day.

Government Changes to school attendance

From September 2015 the government have insisted on an even stricter approach to school attendance. Any child's attendance which falls to **90% or below** will immediately become a **Persistent Absentee**.

- Students attend 1200 lessons per year
- Over 5 years if they attend for 90% of the time they will have missed 600 lessons
- This is half a year of their education wasted

This is not a good thing for either the student or parents because

- Parents have a legal obligation to get their children to school every day and on time and can and *will* be prosecuted.
- There is a very strong link between high attendance and high achievement, children must attend to achieve.
- Any student who falls below 90% (without an official medical explanation) will be immediately passed on to the local authority team and both parent and child will be expected to attend an Attendance/Punctuality Panel.
- Parents will receive a Penalty Notice fine from the Local Authority for taking their child out of school during term time without consent from the school.
- A Penalty Notice fine for Unauthorised Leave during Term Time is issued without warning if a student is absent for a period not agreed or authorised by the Head teacher. This will be for an absence of a minimum of 10 sessions (5 school days) and relating to leave of absence during the term time.
- The fine is £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Failure to pay the fine could lead to prosecution in magistrate's court.

Holidays in Term will not be authorised.

Parents or carers who find themselves in **very exceptional circumstances** regarding absence from school may request authorised absence but the decision to authorise absence is at the Head teacher's discretion and **will not exceed 5 days**.

The following are not exceptional circumstances:

- Family weddings
- Parents patterns of work
- Reduced costs or decisions relating to finance of holidays

As a school, we fully appreciate the financial implications this might have on families taking holidays, particularly during school holiday times. However, all schools in the Rochdale Borough are expected to take appropriate actions to ensure parents are aware of the change, to adopt firm policies and processes to ensure the impact of the government's stance is to reduce authorised absences during term time, increase attendance and see achievement rise for all children.

Once again may I thank you, I do appreciate your efforts to minimise any absence from school.

Yours faithfully



Allison Crompton CBE
Head Teacher

Penalty Notice Fines For Term Time Holidays (or leave of absence)

Following the Isle of Wight v Platt case in 2016, penalty notices for leave in term time was suspended until a decision was made by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court overturned the decision made by the High Court recently so the **Education Welfare Service will be reinstating the issue of fines for holidays in term time.**

Therefore, Middleton Technology School will be issuing referrals for holiday penalty notices **from the week beginning 19th June 2017 which is in line with the Local Authority guidelines.**

Please be aware that **unauthorised leave for 10 sessions (5 school days) or more will qualify for a fine.** No warning will be issued from the Local Authority because all Middleton Technology School parents will have been informed via the school website and the Headteacher's end of year letter.

A holiday in term time can be requested and could be approved by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances, however, **'Exceptional circumstances' can be described as rare, significant, unavoidable and short and that the leave/absences could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.**

If you need further information or details about these fines, please ring the Education Welfare Service on 01706 925115.

Please refer to the 'Letters' section of the school website to view the original letter emailed/posted home on the 16th June 2017 regarding these changes.