

**Please be aware that Sheffield Schools are operating under a new policy for holidays in term time issued to schools in January 2012:**

- Promotes the principle that children should attend school every day.
- Removes the misconception that there is an '*entitlement*' to take term time leave and an '*obligation*' on Headteachers to authorise leave in term time.
- Parents must '*request*' leave and a Headteacher must '*consider*' the request, and make a formal decision. If either a request or decision is not made then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- The '*request*' must include specific start and end dates. A request which does not include a start and end date cannot be considered by the Headteacher and will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Requests must be made 20 days in advance by parents/carers to enable time for schools to consider.
- Headteacher must consider each request on its own merits and the impact on the child's learning, and provide a written response within 10 days of that request being received. The Headteacher may decide to authorise all, part or none, of the leave request. The letter should give full reasons for the decision and outcome.
- Parents must demonstrate why the circumstances for their leave request should be considered as '*special*' (up to 10 days) or '*exceptional*' (more than 10 days, no upper limit). An annual/regular holiday or an availability of cheap flights would not demonstrate special circumstances.
- Any period of '*unauthorised absence*' could result in action being taken against the parent by the authority which could include a fine or court action. The higher '*aggravated offence*' will be pursued by the authority against parents which repeatedly cause their child to be absent from school. Aggravated offences carry higher penalties and are disclosed on CRB disclosures.
- Children who do not return to school by the agreed date of return, or take unauthorised leave, may be at risk of losing their place at the school.

The full policy can be downloaded from the Sheffield City Council web site at <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/education/information-for-parentscarers/at-school/attendance.html>)