

Covid addendum September 2021

Term time holidays

As restrictions begin to lift, some families may be looking to take holidays.

The DfE (Department for Education) guidance is clear - *As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine-* (see details below) *If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, code X should be used in the register.* (DfE guidance - Updated 5 May 2021)

Where a parent wishes to take their child out of school for whatever reason, the onus is on them to apply for a leave of absence and demonstrate why they believe the circumstances are exceptional. Giffards Primary School will make the decision on granting leave of absence, but will not normally do so for a holiday.

View Government Travel advice: [Travel abroad and coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/travel-advice)

Whilst we understand that families have been unable to take holidays recently, we are mindful that

- Attendance has been mandatory since 8 March 2021
- Remote learning has ended except for pupils who are unable to attend school because they are complying with government guidance or legislation around coronavirus and self-isolation(COVID-19)
- Children have already missed a significant time away from school and further absence is detrimental to their education.

Due to the pandemic and associated restrictions to travel during lockdown, we are sensitive to applications and ask that parents respond to the following additional information and questions on the Leave of Absence application form in order to capture full information and help us in making the decision to approve the absence or not:

- **Why are you choosing to travel in term time rather than during the school holiday times?** please note: cheaper flights and holidays rearranged after a previous cancellation that were in term time and rebooked in term time – are not to be considered exceptional circumstances
- **Does your child need to travel with you/can they safely remain in UK with a second parent or close family member?**
- **Are you the parent/s a recognised key worker; are you restricted to when you can travel?** If this is the case, we will require proof from an employer

Penalty notices

Parents must be mindful that fines or other legal action will be considered for unauthorised absence in line with DfE guidance. If leave is taken and is not authorised, then the parent has committed an offence under S444 Ed Act 1996. This can be subject to prosecution in the magistrates' court under ss1 and ss1A of the Act, the penalty fine, if paid, is an alternative to prosecution.

Illness whilst abroad

Where illness is preventing travel back to the UK and is claimed as a reason for a delayed return to school and a Doctors Fit Note is readily produced in justification, we advise as usual that such certification is not acceptable unless accompanied by a travel ticket with dates that would have indicated a timely return.

Quarantine - Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

In accordance with Government guidance – this is continually changing and parents must be aware of this before booking

Travelling abroad – pupils returning from other countries

1. For families travelling from or through a RED country, all travellers must quarantine in a managed hotel for 10 days through a quarantine hotel package, including 2 COVID -19 tests
2. For families travelling from or through an AMBER or GREEN country, people 11 years and over must take a pre departure COVID test and all travellers over 5 years old must take a test on or before day 2 in England – arrival day is day 0. We request that all pupils have a test before returning to school (this can be taken as soon as you arrive back in the UK). No pupil should attend school if they test positive. If a family member tests positive, we urge parents to get their child tested as a precaution.
3. Pupils do not need to quarantine unless the test result is positive.

Where a holiday or travel is booked in term time to a red region and unauthorised by the school, the associated quarantine will also be unauthorised, as this was a known fact prior to travel.

If travel is to a green country and it turns amber whilst abroad or an amber country that goes red, even if the holiday is unauthorised the quarantine will be authorised.

All parents are required to inform the school of where they are travelling to e.g. the UK/abroad – we will need the name and the status of travel to that country.

For any unauthorised absences, remote learning will be via the applications children can access via school log ins such as Reading Eggs/Mathletics/TTRS/Spelling Shed/Purple ash. Teachers will not set and assess work.