

Please ask for: **Nicky Grant**

Direct phone: 01463 702754

Your ref:

Our ref: NG/bm

Date: 7 January 2020

Dear Parent

HOLIDAYS TAKEN OUTWITH THE NORMAL SCHOOL HOLIDAY PERIOD

I am writing to you to seek your support in what is an important matter for your school. We continue to work hard on raising standards of achievement in our schools. A key part of our strategy is to minimise absence levels and parents play a vital role in ensuring their son or daughter attends school as much as possible.

While the vast majority of parents plan family holidays within the allocated 12 weeks during the year, there has been an increasing trend for some parents to remove pupils from schools for holidays.

My reason for writing to you is to ask you to very carefully consider the implications on your child's education if you decide to remove them from school for a family holiday. I do so in the full knowledge that, for some parents, it is not always possible to plan a holiday in the designated school holiday periods. For some parents, summer is a very busy time and a holiday cannot be taken then but I would encourage the use of our two-week October holiday period if you are in this category.

When considering whether or not to exercise your right to remove your children from school for a family holiday, please be aware that such a decision:

- will result in a significant loss in classroom experience;
- will result in a pressure to 'catch up' on missed work by pupils;
- could result in pupils missing assessments with consequential impact on pupils and teachers;
- could result in the loss of curricular activities;
- will affect school attendance records and efforts to raise standards of attendance;
- under the guidance issued at a national level, most family holidays will be coded as unauthorised absence, only in exceptional cases will the absence be recorded as authorised.

In conclusion, I would ask you to be aware of these considerations when making decisions on planning holidays during term time. I have enclosed a link to the school holiday dates on our website to aid you in your planning of any holidays you may be considering

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school_term_dates. If you do decide to make holiday arrangements during term time, you should confirm this in writing to your Head Teacher.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicky Grant'.

Nicky Grant
Interim Head of Education
Care and Learning