

## MAYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



### Holidays in Term Time Policy

Missing school for any reason can deprive a child of educational opportunities and hamper their progress at school. There is a self-evident correlation between good school attendance and academic achievement.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations and the accompanying guidance make it clear that parents/carers do not have a legal right to take their child out of school for holidays in term time. The guidance also notes that any absence for longer than 10 days in term time must be notified to the local Education Welfare Officer.

Current government policy considers an absence rate of 15% as 'persistent absence (15% is about a month off over a year). Persistent absence is a serious problem for pupils. Much of the work children miss when they are off school is never made up, leaving these pupils at a considerable disadvantage for the remainder of their school career. There is also clear evidence of a link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement:

- Of pupils who miss more than 50% of school, only 3% manage to achieve five 9-4s including English and Maths.
- Of pupils who miss between 10 per cent and 20 per cent of school, only 35% manage to achieve five 9-4s GCSEs including English and Maths.
- Of pupils who miss less than 5% of school, 73% achieve five 9-4s including English and Maths.

It is clear from our current registration information that the total amount of holiday leave granted at Mayville is not causing undue concern. I also believe that some of the longer, foreign trips of a lifetime can be of considerable educational advantage and help in the growth in personal confidence of an individual pupil. However, all leave for holidays in term time is discretionary, not an automatic entitlement.

Our term dates are published as far in advance as we can arrange and are linked to the dates of independent schools in Hampshire and especially on Portsea Island, especially at ½ terms.

#### **When considering a request for leave of absence parents are asked to be mindful of the following points:**

- Parents cannot authorise absence; only the school can do this. School may authorise any absence but inappropriate use of authorisation can be just as damaging to a child's education as unauthorised absence. All absences are treated as unauthorised unless and until school agrees on a satisfactory explanation.
- Absence from school means absence from the learning experience of each individual lesson. Whilst the 'work' can be 'caught up' all the discussion and contribution to the learning by the teacher cannot.
- Work can sometimes be set to take away but this is not always an effective way of 'keeping up.'

- Parents are expected to request leave of absence in advance of any such holiday being booked. The school will reply promptly.
- Requests for leave of absence are recommended to be for no more than 1 week of duration.
- Leave of absence for the first week of any term is not desirable. Beginnings are very important and much of our best academic and pastoral work involves gearing up our pupils for the work of the term.
- Absence in the last week of term, whilst slightly less of a concern, will mean that pupils miss that moment of 'completion', especially if they are at the end of their time in the Junior or Senior School.
- Leave of absence will not usually be given to pupils in UV and parents are reminded of the value of the revision week during the Easter holiday of the UV year. The current system of controlled coursework means that any absence during UV is potentially damaging to the final result of GCSE.
- Leave of absence should not be requested during times of public exams such as GCSEs.
- Leave of absence during school exam weeks in the summer term is most unhelpful. The weeks are noted on the annual calendar. Sitting exams outside these set times is not conducive to good academic performance and disrupts the timetable for marking and report writing.
- Leave of absence will not be refused for events concerning immediate family such as weddings or funerals but will be limited to a maximum of 5 consecutive school days.
- The school is minded that family life is sometimes very complicated and if you wish to request leave of absence for non-holiday circumstances the Headteacher is always willing to discuss them prior to a written request.
- Leave of absence is unlikely to be approved for a pupil who already has had a significant amount of time off school in the academic year for medical or other reasons.

Unauthorised absence is very rare at Mayville. However, such unauthorized absences are recorded formally and form part of the summative report and assessment of a pupil when they leave the school. References for access to courses, apprenticeships and employment always require information regarding the applicant's attendance.

It is a mandatory requirement of the school to contact the Local Education Welfare Officer should they have concerns with regard to matters of attendance.

I hope that these expectations are helpful in framing parents' plans for the booking of holidays.

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