



St. James' Church of England Primary School

**'Building One Faith, One
Family,
Our Future'**

Discretionary Pupil Leave of Absence Policy

Devised by the school Attendance Team – January 2018
Reviewed by D. Theobalds – January 2023
Approved by Governors – Spring 2023

Review Date – Spring 2026 (Resources Committee)

Foundation, Vision and Intent

St James' Lower Darwen

Church of England Primary School



"Building One Faith, One Family, Our Future."

"We offer a holistic curriculum that champions our community and is aspirational."

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

through

ENRICHMENT

THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

SKATS

FORGIVENESS

COMPASSION

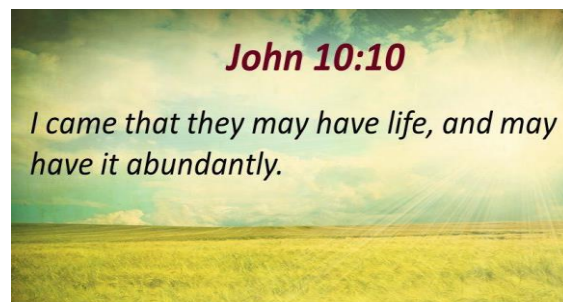
LOVE

TRUTH

JUSTICE

Jeremiah 29:11

John 10:10



We want our children to know that **God has a plan for them** that means **they live their best life possible**.

Each **policy** and procedure within school, alongside the ongoing **curriculum** delivery, our **SKATS** programme, **enrichment** and the **spiritual development** offered to our families through Worship, RE and our links with Church, work towards making this happen.

POLICY FOR MANAGING DISCRETIONARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE – INCLUDING FAMILY HOLIDAYS TAKEN IN TERM-TIME

Our policy on discretionary leave of absence for pupils has been drawn up by the school Attendance Team and is approved by the Governing Body, in line with LA recommendations in their policy on managing requests for leave of absence from school.

We have adopted the LA proforma/form application for parents. It is expected that this form is completed in advance by parents/carers when requesting any leave of absence for a child from school.

All guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) states that parents should not normally take pupils on holidays during term-time and that schools should only agree an absence if there are exceptional circumstances that warrant it.

Parents are not entitled to withdraw children whilst school is in session.

Requests for leave of absence will be considered on their individual merits taking account of:

- the age of the child;
- the time of year proposed for the leave of absence;
- the nature of the leave of absence;
- parental wishes;
- previous requests for leave of absence;
- the overall attendance pattern of the pupil;
- the child's stage of education and their progress.

Once the request has been discussed and dates agreed with the Headteacher the request form should be filled out. A copy will be kept in school for file purposes and the original copy will be sent to the local authority inclusion team for monitoring purposes.

If the school agrees the leave of absence and the pupil goes on holiday for 10 days or less, then this will be recorded in the class register using the 'H' code.

Any leave of absence that is not agreed will be marked as unauthorised and may result in a referral to the Inclusion Officer. An unauthorised absence could lead to parents/carers being issued with an education penalty notice.

Parents/carers do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school for a leave of absence. Parents/carers always have to get permission from the Headteacher and the Headteacher always has the final decision on whether an application for leave will be authorised. The following criteria must be satisfied:

- Any absence requested from school must be discussed with the Headteacher beforehand and the form for leave of absence filled in.
Please ensure you always speak to the Headteacher before making any confirmed bookings if the leave of absence is for a holiday.
- The dates for the agreed absence must be adhered to. These will be clearly stated on the completed form.
- If the child does not return on the agreed date, school will contact the emergency number(s). If no valid reason is given for the pupil's failure to return to school, the Inclusion Officer will be informed.

In conclusion, we believe that home/school liaison is a vital part of education and we are keen to develop a strong partnership with you to ensure our children attain their maximum potential.

'EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS AND EVERY DAY IS IMPORTANT'