



Dear Parents and Carers,

St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Leave of Absence Policy Statement
July 2017

I write to confirm that from September 2017, all schools within St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic MAT (St Joseph's, St John's and St Paul's) will be following the local authority's policy and procedures for considering term time absences. For all new leave of absence requests that we receive, we will now issue a warning letter if your request for leave of absence is unauthorised. This could incur a penalty notice.

For an absence to be authorised, it typically needs to be for a short period of time, for a significant and unavoidable reason, and for an event that could not have been organised for any of the 175 days of the year that the child is not at school. It is a parents' responsibility to complete a leave of absence form at least 4 weeks in advance, and provide appropriate evidence when the form is submitted.

In this context I think it is important to remind you that the Education Act of 1996 states that suitable education for a child's age, aptitude and ability must be provided and that the parent of a child of compulsory age, registered at a school and failing to attend regularly, is guilty of an offence punishable by law. Education regulations of 2013 state that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Therefore, registered pupils of compulsory age are required by law to be in school. Parents should endeavour to do all they can to ensure their child attends school for the 190 school days of the school year.

For your information a copy of the local authority's penalty notice procedures will be saved in the policy section of our school website.

Yours faithfully,

Patrick Keane
Chair of Directors