



1st July 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

Leave of Absence in Term Time

All JTMAT Schools want to ensure that our pupils are able to take the fullest possible advantages of all that we have to offer. We want every child to attend school every day that they can. This will give them the best chance to learn, achieve and develop.

The overwhelming majority of our parents support us in ensuring that their children attend school regularly, for this we thank you. However, requests for leave during term time continue to be made to all of the schools within JTMAT. Recently, to ensure consistency and clarity, an Attendance Policy, for all schools within the JTMAT, has been approved. A ratified version will also be in place from September 2019. These Policies can be found at <https://jtm.co.uk/> Alternatively a hard copy can be provided upon request.

Each school continues to have its own Attendance Procedures, detailing their specific processes, and these can be found on the individual school's website.

Requests for leave, in exceptional circumstances, should be made in advance of the event and in writing. Some schools use specific forms whilst other request an email or letter be sent in. Please see each school's individual Attendance Procedure for more guidance. A leave of absence request will be considered by the Headteacher or Head of School to deem whether it is an exceptional circumstance. If a leave of absence is granted, then it may be for a proportion of the time requested. There may be discussion between Heads, within JTMAT, should leave of absence requests include children from several settings. Should a parent not declare a child at a different JTMAT setting, any response regarding the leave of absence request may be retracted until discussions and agreements have been reached between the JTMAT schools. If a Headteacher or Head of School does not consider the request for leave to be exceptional, then the absence may be recorded as an unauthorised leave of absence should the parent still choose to take their child out of school.

Any period of unauthorised leave of absence may result in a parent receiving a penalty notice fine. For specific thresholds please see the JTMAT Attendance Policy. Should a fixed penalty notice be issued, the fine applies to '**per parent/carer and per child**'. This is regardless of who applied for the leave. Currently the parent has 3 choices:

- A fine of £60 if paid within 21 days
- A fine of £120 is paid after 21 days but within 28 days
- In the case of a non-payment of the fine then Notice will be withdrawn and will trigger the fast-track prosecution process under the provisions of section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. If found 'guilty' then this would result in a criminal record for that parent

Regulations are clear that any lateness in the return to school may be deemed, following a period of authorised leave of absence, as **unauthorised leave of absence**. If a parent does not apply for leave, but we believe that the pupil has been taken on holiday, then we will write to the parent to express our concern. The parent will be expected to provide contrary evidence to support the absence by a specified date. Should this not be provided then the absence will be coded as **unauthorised leave of absence** and the relevant procedures will be applied. Please be aware that retrospective approval for absence cannot be granted.

John Taylor MAT

CEO: Mike Donoghue MA (Hons), MBA, NPQH, NLE



It is recognised that parents work hard to ensure that their child/ren attend school on a regular basis and we really appreciate your support and understanding in this matter.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Donoghue'.

M Donoghue
CEO
John Taylor MAT