

## Attendance

With the recent high profile press coverage regarding the authorising of term time holidays I thought it would be useful to clarify current procedures.

From September 2013 Headteachers are no longer permitted to grant leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any such absence taken without authorisation could be liable for a penalty notice. Equally, absences such as late arrival at school and continued ad hoc absences resulting in overall poor attendance could be referred to the Educational Welfare Service.

I met recently with the Educational Welfare Officer to clarify guidance. Parents and carers have a duty to ensure that children in their care have regular attendance at school and can ultimately be prosecuted if they fail to do so.

Sickness is not automatically authorised and pupils who are late after registration closes incur a 'U' code in the register which is an unauthorised absence. Schools have a duty to refer these matters to the Educational Welfare Service following appropriate communication with parents or carers.

At Little Waltham School registration opens at 8:45am when pupils enter school and undertake organised activities which support their learning – a valuable time when they continue to progress. Registration closes at 9:10am. Pupils entering school after 9:00 am but before 9:10 am incur an 'L' in the register, entry after 9:10 am is treated as an unauthorised absence and a 'U' code is entered in the register.

**Any absence from school has an adverse impact on a pupil's learning; indeed attendance of 85% at the end of an academic year equates to almost a half term's absence**

In order to ensure that we are able to fulfil our role we would ask you to provide evidence of medical appointments where possible, for example an appointment card or letter, and to ensure attendance where appropriate.

*Overall attendance at Little Waltham is generally high – currently standing at 96.6%.  
Good attendance supports pupils in their learning and achievement – thank you for your commitment to this.*

Mrs E A Maycock – Headteacher  
09/09/2014

