

# Simonstone St. Peter's Church of England School



Head Teacher: Mrs. S Smith

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## DFE Changes to Authorised Absences

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for helping to ensure that pupil attendance at Simonstone St. Peter's CE School continues to be outstanding.

The Government has changed the rules regarding children's school attendance and we have been asked to share these with you.

From September 2013, the Department for Education states that Head Teachers are not to grant any leave of absence during term time. Whilst there has, in the past been an element of flexibility available to Head Teacher's for those in 'exceptional circumstances', a phrase which remains in the legislation, the amount of discretion given has been severely curtailed. For example, the definition of 'exceptional' does not include family holidays for any reason which will in future be regarded as 'Unauthorised'. Any parent wishing to claim 'exceptional circumstances' needs to seek prior permission from the Head Teacher well in advance of the proposed date, by written letter. Were a request to be turned down, or were an absence to occur without prior permission, this would result in absence being counted as unauthorized.

The legislation also extends the expectation that schools will apply a penalty notice to parents in cases of unauthorised absence.

As you would expect, we will continue to work closely with parents on matters of attendance. May we remind you, that if your child is absent for any reason, we ask that you contact the school office on the first morning of their absence and that a short letter is sent in to school on their return.

Yours sincerely,

*Sally Smith*

Head Teacher



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Head Teacher

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