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Dear Parents and Carers,

Following the High Court's decision a fortnight ago, regarding term-time holidays, I wanted to clarify the school's position on this issue.

As a parent of two children, I am no stranger to the difficulty of booking an affordable holiday for my family. We do however have 190 school days per year which children should attend and enjoy substantial school holidays throughout the academic calendar. I am fortunate in that my holidays coincide with my children's and therefore I have that flexibility. However, I understand that for working and non-working parents, that is not always the case.

I also, however, wear the hat of a Headteacher, with a responsibility for the children's attainment and progress at Kew Riverside. When children miss school, teachers need to break from their plans and re-teach certain aspects, which can hold-up the learning of others. If a child has a special educational need, the effects can be even greater. It is clear to me, from every school I have worked in, that low attendance equates to lower attainment and progress in the vast majority of cases. When your child misses school, the repercussions are far greater than just their own education.

Therefore, if a request is made for a term-time holiday, it will be declined. There are certain extraordinary cases, as there always have been, where permission may be granted. These will be treated on a case by case basis. If parents opt to take their children out of school during term time, this would be unauthorised. If such absences caused the child's attendance to fall near to or below 90%, the school has a legal obligation to inform the Educational Welfare Officer who will then make contact with the family. Attendance of 90% is the equivalent or missing 7 days per term. Our attendance target at Kew Riverside is 96%.

I would therefore urge you, for the educational benefit of your child rather than the threat of any action, to refrain from term-time holidays.

Kindest regards

Darren Norman
Headteacher

