



East Riding of Yorkshire
Secondary School
Behaviour and Attendance
Partnership



EAST RIDING
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

East Riding of Yorkshire
Primary School
Behaviour & Attendance
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Term Time Holidays Policy And Procedures

East Riding of Yorkshire Council

**Primary Behaviour &
Attendance Partnership**

**Secondary Behaviour & Attendance
Partnership**

February 2010

Term Time Holidays Policy and Procedures

Introduction

The policy outlined below has been agreed by both the primary and secondary school behaviour and attendance partnerships in the East Riding of Yorkshire and is aimed at supporting schools in managing requests from parents for term time holidays. It is intended to make this process clearer and more consistent. This policy is linked with the penalty notice code of conduct that all headteachers and the local authority have agreed to work within.

Background

Schools are required to provide education for 190 days a year and it is expected that children who are registered at a school will attend for this time. Parents do not have an automatic right for their children to have time off school to go on a holiday, this is entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

In 2007-08, 14 per cent of absence from schools nationally was a result of family holidays, however in the East Riding of Yorkshire this figure was nearly 21 per cent, one of the highest in the country. In 2008-09 this trend continued.

Research shows that children achieve less the more school absence they have. A child absent from school for two weeks each year means that the child misses the equivalent of two terms of education over their school life.

In 2007 only 36 per cent of pupils with more than 12 days absence in secondary schools got 5 GCSEs, compared to 91 per cent of pupils with an average of 6 days absence.

Only 52 per cent of primary school pupils with 12 or more days absence achieved level 4 or above in English and Mathematics compared to 84 per cent of pupils where absence was less than 6 days.

This is compelling evidence for us to strive to reduce the number of school days missed due to term time holidays.

Some headteachers have been reluctant to unauthorise term time holidays for three reasons:

1. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) have monitored unauthorised absence and tasked local authorities and schools to reduce this.
2. Refusing term time holidays was considered to have a detrimental effect on a school's relationship with families.
3. There was little support for schools when parents decided to take their children out of school without authorisation.

The situation has changed and there are a number of reasons why it is no longer appropriate for headteachers to continue to authorise holidays as they have in the past.

- The DCSF are no longer monitoring authorised or unauthorised absence, they are now focusing on overall absence and therefore all absences need to be reduced.
- The establishment of the primary and secondary behaviour attendance partnerships provides an opportunity for an East Riding wide cross phase agreement which would support headteachers when discussing their decision with families.
- The East Riding of Yorkshire Council has adopted the term time policy and now has a more streamlined procedure for penalty notices which would support headteachers where they do not authorise term time holidays.

General Principles

The following general principles underpin this policy:

- (i) The principles of honesty, openness, transparency and the spirit of co-operation underpin the proposals.
- (ii) All schools within the East Riding agree to follow the policies through to penalty notice if appropriate. This will ensure that the policy is applied in a consistent manner and provides equity for all parents and schools.
- (iii) Support of this policy from the local authority will be as a partner in both the primary and secondary behaviour and attendance partnerships. The inclusion and access services of the Council will ensure other local authority departments are aware of and include the philosophy of this policy in their practice.
- (iv) Where a holiday absence request form is not submitted, absences will not be authorised retrospectively. In these circumstances the penalty notice code of conduct must be followed.
- (v) Data from each individual school in relation to term time holidays will be monitored by the local authority and shared with schools and the partnerships. This will allow the partnerships to assess the impact of this policy.
- (vi) The behaviour and attendance partnerships will review this policy annually.

Policy

Requests for term time holidays will normally only be considered in the following circumstances-

1. Where a parent has to take holidays at a time specified by their employer. This would include parents who work in certain professions, for example farmers, factory workers, fire fighters. Head teachers will use their knowledge of families to manage requests made by self employed parents.
2. Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
3. Where parents are considering emigration and wish to visit the country as part of their consideration.
4. To attend a wedding or funeral of a close member of the family that is taking place out of the area.

Evidence would be required in each case.

The partnerships have agreed that holidays will not, **under any circumstances** (including those listed above) be authorised at the following times-

1. The first six weeks of any academic year (applies to all pupils).
2. Year six transition day (for pupils in year six).
3. Year six SATs week (for pupils in year six).
4. Year nine options time (for pupils in year nine).
5. At any time during years 10 & 11 (for all pupils in these year groups).
6. At any time specified by the school:
 - o Year 6: between the beginning of the summer term and SATS week
 - o Years 1-5: the first 3 weeks of the summer term

Publicity and Awareness Raising

The local authority will publicise the cross phase agreement to parents through the media and the publication of leaflets.

Schools will produce leaflets and include information in newsletters etc, as agreed by the partnership.

Procedures

Schools will retain a supply of term time holiday absence request forms and give to parents as required. The policy, information on term time holidays and request forms will also be available on the Council's website.

Parents must return the form to the headteacher or to the senior member of school staff that the headteacher has delegated this decision making to.

If siblings or other children living in the same household (of compulsory school age) are known and identified on the holiday request form (Appendix 1) and attend an East Riding of Yorkshire school, the headteachers from both schools must reach a joint decision regarding the parent's request within five school days of receiving the holiday request form. This will ensure an East Riding of Yorkshire wide consistent approach.

The headteacher will decide if the request should be authorised or unauthorised using the 'Term Time Holiday Decision Making Flowchart' (Appendix 2) and the principles within this policy.

Holiday absences taken during term time will be marked-

- 'F' if it is an authorised absence for an extended family holiday.
- 'G' if it is an unauthorised absence for a family holiday, or sessions in excess of agreement.
- 'H' if it is an authorised absence for a family holiday

Authorised Holiday Requests

The headteacher must write to the parent who has made the request, informing them of the decision, the date of the child's last school day before the holiday and the date the school expect the child to return to school. Within the letter it should be clear how the absence will be marked on the child's attendance certificate. The letter should also make clear that no more absence due to term time holidays will be authorised during the same academic year. A copy of the letter should be sent to any parent who does not have day to day care and responsibility of the child but does have parental responsibility. A copy of both letters should go on the child's school file.

Unauthorised Holiday Requests

The headteacher must write to the parent who has made the request, informing them of the decision and the reason why this was made. The letter should clearly highlight that if the parent decides to take the child on the holiday, the absences will be unauthorised and a penalty notice will be issued to each parent with day to day care and responsibility for each child. A term time holiday leaflet must be enclosed with the letter. A copy of the letter should be sent to any parent who does not have day to day care and responsibility of the child but

does have parental responsibility. Copies of both letters should go on the child's school file.

Delayed Return Following Authorised Term Time Holiday

If the child does not return to school on the agreed date following their holiday, the school should investigate the absence considering the East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Children Missing Education Policy. It is important to follow this policy to safeguard children, for example from forced marriage.

If a child returns to school later than the agreed date and their parent says their return was unavoidably delayed, this absence must be recorded as 'G' (family holiday not agreed or days in excess of agreement). This also applies where a holiday is taken in school holidays but extends into term time.

Penalty Notice Due To Term Time Holidays

Once the unauthorised holiday has been taken and the child has returned, the school must complete a penalty notice referral form (Appendix 3) and email it to education.welfare@eastriding.gov.uk, together with a copy of the holiday request form, the letter sent by the headteacher to the parent and a copy of the child's up to date attendance certificate. Two penalty notices can be issued to any one parent with respect to any one child in one academic year.

If procedures have been followed correctly and the case meets the penalty notice criteria the education welfare service will issue a penalty notice.

Parent Pays Penalty Notice

The case is closed and the period of time that the parent received the penalty notice for will not be used in any further proceedings.

Parent Does Not Pay Penalty Notice

If after 42 days the penalty notice remains unpaid, the education welfare service will prepare the case for court. The school will be required to provide a headteacher's certificate prepared by their education welfare officer. The education welfare officer will keep the school informed regarding proceedings.

Useful Documents

DCSF Keeping Pupil registers 'Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations (2008)'

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/attendance/pupilregis/>

Absence and Attendance Codes 'Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities' (January 2009)

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/attendance/pupilregis/>

Children Missing Education Policy

Schools intranet:

<http://unixinet/schools/> follow the LL admin tab, the document can be found in the Education Welfare Service Folder

Council intranet:

http://unixinet.eastriding.gov.uk/pls/intranet/docs/FOLDER/ROOTFOLDER/DIRECTORATES2005/CFAS/INCLUSION_SERVICES/ELLRESOURCES/ELL_EDUCATION_WELFARE_SERVICE/CME+PROCEDURES+%26+GUIDANCE+2008.DOC

Useful sites

Teachernet

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/attendance/>

Contacts

Education Welfare Service

Room FF20

County Hall

Beverley

East Riding of Yorkshire

HU17 9BA

education.welfare@eastriding.gov.uk

(01482) 392146

DCSF school attendance team

school.attendance@dscf.gsi.gov.uk



Term Time Holiday Request Form

School -					
Student Details					
Name		Date of birth		Form	
Address					
Contact Numbers					
Sibling Details (or other children living in the household)					
Name		Date of birth		School	

I request permission for my child to be absent from school: -					
First Day of Absence		Date of Return		Total School Days	
Reason for request					
Parent's contractual conditions (a letter from employer must accompany this application)					
Child or parents rehabilitation of medical/emotional issues (a letter from your GP must accompany this application)					
Emigration investigation					
Family wedding or funeral out of the area					

Declaration	
<i>I have read and understood the information on term time holidays, unauthorised absences and penalty notices and agree to the terms and conditions of the East Riding of Yorkshire Council.</i>	
Signed (Parent/Carer)	Date

For School Use Only				
The school has considered your request for leave of absence and your child's absences will be recorded as follows: -				
Authorised		Unauthorised		Unauthorised absences to date
Signed:		Position:		Date:

*Original signed and completed forms to be retained with pupil's records.
Copy returned to the parent/carer of the pupil to confirm authorisation or refusal before the intended holiday.*



Term Time Holidays

Information for Parents

You are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly. There is, however, a discretionary power held by headteachers to authorise absence in extenuating circumstances for up to 10 days in an academic year between September and July. This may include term time holidays, but this is **not an entitlement**. The headteacher will only authorise holidays during term time in accordance with the East Riding Behaviour & Attendance Partnership 'Term Time Holiday Policy'. Headteachers will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a child's education.

Your request for your child's absence from school to be authorised must fall in to one of the following categories-

1. Where you have to take holidays at a time specified by your employer.
2. Where a holiday abroad is recommended as part of your, or your child's, rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
3. Where you are considering emigration and wish to visit the country as part of your consideration.
4. To attend a wedding or funeral of a close member of the family that is taking place out of the area.

Evidence would be required in each case.

The partnership has agreed that holidays will not, **under any circumstances** (including those mentioned above), be authorised at the following times-

1. The first six weeks of any academic year (for all pupils).
2. Year six transition day (for pupils in that year group).
3. Year six SATs week (for pupils in that year group).
4. Year nine options time (for pupils in that year group).
5. At any time during years 10 & 11 (for pupils in these year groups).
6. At any time specified by the school:
 - Year 6: between the beginning of the summer term and SATS week
 - Years 1-5: the first 3 weeks of the summer term

If your request is approved, you are required to ensure your child catches up on any missed school work. This is your responsibility and school are not obliged to provide work for your child to complete.

Any excessive family holiday or any unauthorised leave of absence will be recorded as unauthorised by the school on your child's records. This may result in legal proceedings against you, either through a Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court



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Penalty Notices

With the implementation of the Anti Social Behaviour Act (2003) the local authority has statutory powers to tackle poor school attendance and/or unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the school has not given permission for or where an explanation has not been provided by the parent or carer.

Penalty Notices will be used as a deterrent to prevent a pattern of unauthorised absences developing. They will be issued by post direct to the home of a parent/carer after possibly just one warning, or in the case of absences without acceptable cause, without warning. This includes pupils caught on truancy sweeps, **excessive or unauthorised family holidays** and persistent late arrival after the close of registration.

If you believe at any stage that your child's absence from school may leave you liable for prosecution or a penalty notice, it is important you take action without delay to secure their regular attendance.

Support and guidance on attendance is always available and if you have any questions about this, or if you need help to achieve improvement, then please contact your school to discuss this.

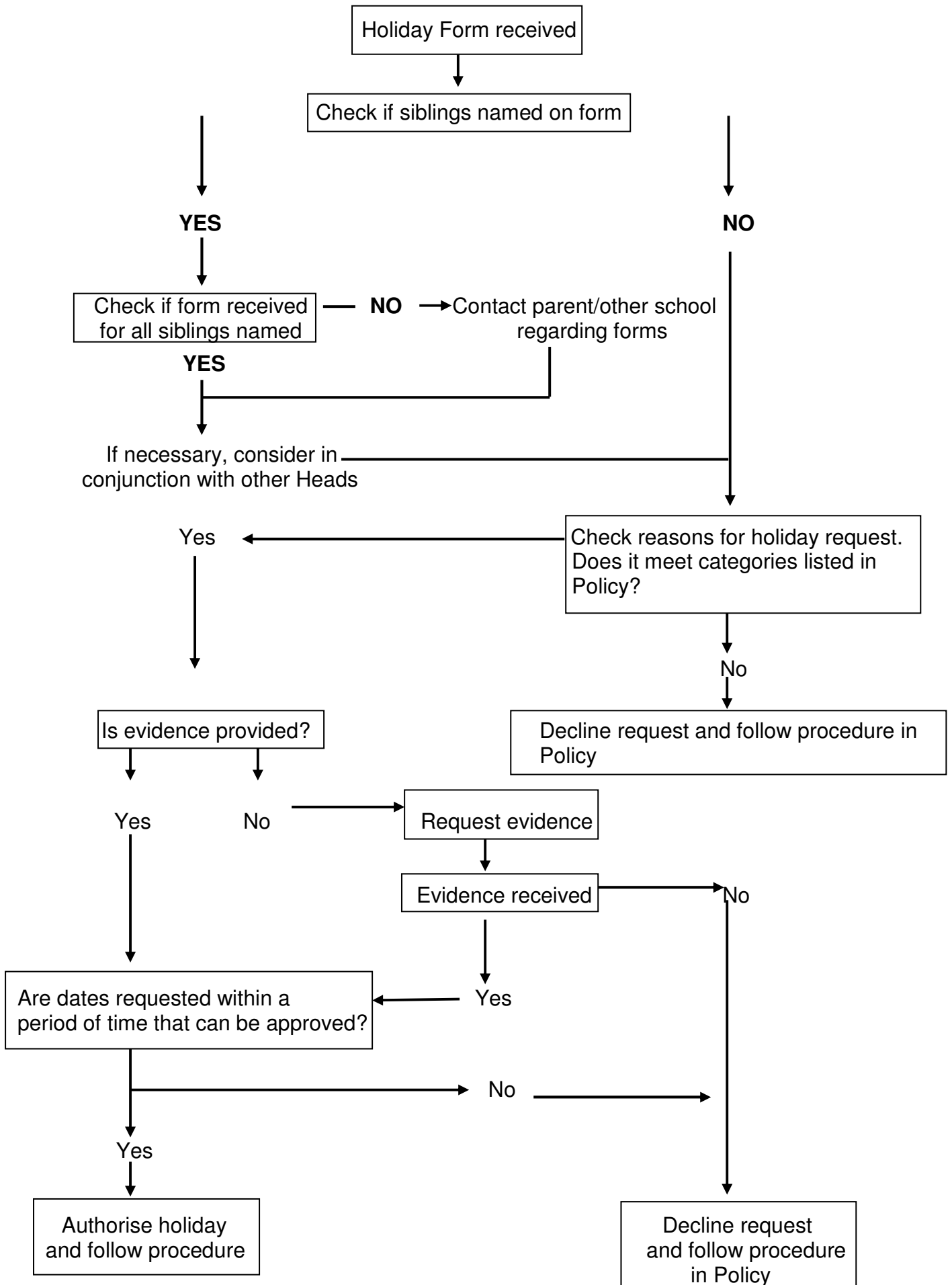
Further advice and support can also be made available to you through the education welfare service.

Contact

Education Welfare Service
Room FF20
County Hall
Beverley
East Riding of Yorkshire
HU17 9BA
education.welfare@eastriding.gov.uk
(01482) 392146

We advise that you do not book a holiday until you have submitted a 'Term Time Holiday Request Form' and received confirmation from the Headteacher that they are able, in line with the 'East Riding of Yorkshire's Behaviour and Attendance Partnership Policy for Term Time Holidays', to authorise the request.

TERM TIME HOLIDAY DECISION MAKING FLOWCHART





**Education Welfare Service
Penalty Notice Referral Form**

Name of Referrer			
Referral is from	School		Police

Name of school/police station	
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Full Name of Child			
<i>First Name</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>Date of Birth</i>	<i>School Year</i>

Full Name(s) of Person(s) with parental responsibility	
1. <i>First Name</i>	<i>Last Name</i>
2. <i>First Name</i>	<i>Last Name</i>

Address (including postcode)

Period of absence for which a penalty notice is requested	<i>From (Week commencing date)</i>	<i>To (Week ending date)</i>
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Specific reasons for believing a penalty notice is appropriate: (Continue overleaf if needed)
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I certify that during the period indicated above, the school was open for _____ sessions during which time the name pupil attended for _____ sessions.

_____ of the _____ sessions were **unauthorised** by the school. Please attach a copy of registration certificate.

Name	Signature
Position	Date
EWO Signature	Date

Please make sure the following documents are attached to this referral:

For referrals for unauthorised absence

- Penalty notice warning letter
- Attendance certificate

Referrals for unauthorised term time holiday

- A copy of the holiday form
- Attendance certificate showing the 'Gs'

Referrals for truancy where a PCSO has found a child in a public place during school hours without good reason

- A copy of the witness statement
- An attendance certificate

The penalty notice can only be processed with all the relevant documents attached.