



Ocean Academy Poole

an Aspirations Academy
Self-Worth | Engagement | Purpose

'Bringing Learning to life: No limits. No barriers.'

Martin West - Acting Principal
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Dear Parents and Carers,

21 October 2025

We are writing to address an important matter that has come to our attention: the growing number of holiday requests submitted since the start of the academic year in September.

As a school, we are committed to ensuring every child receives the best possible education. Regular, punctual attendance is essential, and missing school for holidays during term time can cause disruption to your child's learning and progress. We would like to extend our thanks to families who follow and support the guidance in relation to this but felt it appropriate at this time to remind our school community of the rules in place.

As a school, we are required to follow the Department for Education's national attendance framework. This includes the "10 in 10" rule, which means that if a child has 10 or more unauthorised sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) within any 10-week period (this can cross academic years), we must take formal action. This applies to holidays taken during term time and when your child is absent and you do not inform the school of the reason or if the reason given is not considered as authorised (i.e. shopping trips, day trips, birthday celebrations). If a child arrives late to school, and after the registers close at 9.15am, this will be recorded as a U code and unauthorised for the morning's attendance.

Term-time holidays will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances (details of these can be found on our website). These are rare and will be considered by the Principal on completion of a 'Leave of Absence' form. Requests that do not meet this threshold will not be agreed to.

Under the updated penalty notice system introduced in autumn 2024, a fine may be issued if the 10 in 10 rule is met:

- The **first fine** issued to a parent is **£80** if paid within 21 days, rising to **£160** if paid after 21 days.
- If a **second fine** is issued for the same child within a **three-year period**, it will automatically be **£160**, regardless of when it is paid.
- No more than two fines can be issued to the same parent for the same child within three years. Further unauthorised absences may lead to prosecution. This means that repeated term-time holidays can lead to significantly higher financial penalties.

Staff at Ocean Academy are required to notify the attendance team at BCP if a child misses 10 sessions or more of school in 10 weeks. It is BCP who decides whether a fine will be issued, not Ocean Academy staff. Since September we have already submitted 15 fine requests to BCP.

We urge all families to plan holidays during official school breaks and to prioritise attendance. Every day in school matters — and every absence affects your child's learning.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Richardson Attendance Lead



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