



MARTON-CUM-GRAFTON
CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Reas Lane, Marton cum Grafton, YO51 9QB

16th July 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

Supporting Excellent Attendance

As we come to the end of another successful academic year, we would like to thank all parents and carers for the support you have given in ensuring that your child attends school regularly.

Regular attendance is one of the most significant factors influencing children's educational achievement, wellbeing and future opportunities. Children who attend school consistently are more likely to make strong academic progress, develop positive relationships and benefit fully from the wider experiences that school provides.

We are committed to working in partnership with families to promote excellent attendance and to provide support wherever barriers to attendance arise. If your child is experiencing difficulties that affect their attendance, we encourage you to speak to your school Attendance Lead at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate support can be considered.

One area where we continue to receive enquiries is requests for leave of absence during term time, particularly for family holidays. We are therefore writing to clarify the school's approach, which reflects national legislation and statutory guidance.

Under *The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024*, Headteachers may only grant leave of absence during term time where they are satisfied that exceptional circumstances apply.

The Department for Education's statutory guidance, *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)*, makes clear that schools should only authorise leave in



Elevate Multi Academy Trust, Alanbrooke Academy, Alanbrooke Barracks, Topcliffe, Thirsk, North Yorkshire, YO7 3SF

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exceptional circumstances and should determine each request on its own individual merits.

For this reason, leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday will not normally be authorised, as family holidays are not generally considered to constitute exceptional circumstances.

Whilst every application is considered individually, exceptional circumstances are expected to be rare, significant and unavoidable. Examples might include:

- the funeral of an immediate family member;
- a serious and unforeseen family emergency;
- exceptional circumstances relating to military deployment;
- other unique situations that could not reasonably be arranged outside school holidays.

The fact that a child has special educational needs or a disability does not, in itself, automatically constitute exceptional circumstances. However, we will always consider the individual circumstances of each application before reaching a decision.

Where leave is not authorised and a child is absent from school, the absence will normally be recorded as unauthorised. In line with national attendance regulations and North Yorkshire Council's Code of Conduct, this may result in consideration of a Fixed Penalty Notice or other appropriate legal intervention where the relevant thresholds are met.

We appreciate that families often face difficult decisions regarding holidays and other commitments, and we recognise that this guidance may sometimes be disappointing.



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However, our responsibility is to ensure that every child benefits from the maximum possible time in school and that statutory guidance is applied consistently and fairly.

Thank you for your continued support in promoting excellent attendance and helping every child achieve their full potential.

Yours faithfully

Marie-Louise Thirlaway

Mrs ML Thirlaway
Headteacher



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