

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to seek your support for new processes in the application for extended leave.

In 2017 a mere forty-five students took a total of 770 days of leave; which amounts to almost four years of accumulated leave during school terms. We have found that typically students with an excessive amount of leave return to school academically behind. They not only miss the content and skills taught during their absence but may also have forgotten the previous few weeks as well. Some children also experience difficulties socially in adapting back to friendship groups. Additionally, excessive absence may impact on your child's high school placement as high schools are asking us about students' attendance patterns when making decisions about out of area placements.

From the beginning of 2018 we are asking parents to ensure leave is taken during school holidays. There are twelve weeks of school holidays throughout the year and we ask that family visits, vacations and other occasions and celebrations are taken during this time to ensure your child's progress is not impeded. We know for most parents this is understood and already adhered to.

In accordance with the Education Reform Act of 1990, and sanctioned by the P&C, please be advised of the following Department of Education processes:

- Parents and carers must seek approval before taking leave during the school term as part of their travel arrangements. The extended leave application form is distributed from the school office.
- Once the application form has been filled out, an appointment must be made at the front office to meet with the Principal. This must be done before booking any tickets in order to avoid potential issues.
- Leave will either be approved or not granted. Please note the Department of Education Attendance Policy states "A principal should not accept a reason for travel during school term if it is not in the best interests of the student".
- Should leave be granted, copies of the plane tickets or other documentation will then be sought to complete the process.

Copies of the school's Attendance Policy can be found on the school website for further clarification. See <http://www.bankstownw-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/>

We seek your support for these processes in ensuring your child's academic and social progress is not adversely affected by extended periods of leave.

N. Benson
Assistant Principal

F. Bonello
Principal