

Leave of Absence Requests (including Holidays in Term Time)

Principals can only grant term time absences in 'exceptional circumstances. These will be decided on the individual circumstances and the relevant context behind the request.

The principal does not have to give permission if you request a holiday. If the holiday is not approved; your child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Exceptional Circumstances may include:

- Funerals or weddings of close family members
- Forces staff returning from abroad
- Religious observance
- Graduation of an immediate family member
- Parents/carers returning from having to work abroad for a fixed, minimum term period
- Compassionate leave
- Performance at representative level (County/National) with accompanying letter from the relevant body

NB Please see note re: Fixed Penalty notices in respect of Poor School Attendance and Unauthorised Holidays / Leave of Absence which can be found at the end of the document.

How do I make a request for a Leave of Absence?

- Complete the leave of absence request form on the next page.
- Detach the form and hand it in to the academy reception.
- If you consider the circumstances to be **exceptional** attach a letter addressed to the principal explaining the circumstances of the request.
- You will be notified in writing informing you of the decision.
- Please note that unless circumstances are judged to be exceptional, the leave of absence will be declined.

“Taking your child out of school during term time will result in missed learning opportunities. National studies have shown that there is a strong link between school attendance and attainment.”

Should I still fill in a form if I know the request will be unauthorised?

YES

We contact parents/carers on a daily basis if we do not know the reason for absence of a student. It is very important you let us know why your child is absent even if the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If deciding if the absence is **EXCEPTIONAL**, the Principal will consider the following:

- Is the absence within the control of the parent/carer?

(A letter, on headed paper, from an employer is required if the absence is due to the availability of leave)

- Does the student have a good attendance record? (eg. At least 95%+)
- Will the absence affect the student's academic progress?

(for example a holiday taken at the start of the academic year, an absence which occurs at the same time as external or internally set exams or an absence which requires a student to be absent from school at set periods of times each week, each month etc)

- Is the activity a worthwhile experience which will enrich the student's broader education? (Our guidance is to only authorise two days or equivalent in each academic year for such activities)

APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

If you consider you have to take your child out of school in term time, please complete this form and return to school at least 14 days before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

Student Name:

Tutor Group:

Home Address:

First day of absence:

Date of return to school:

Total number of days missed:

Reasons for absence (please attach a letter if you require additional space)
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I understand that if the absence request is unauthorised the Education Welfare Officer will be notified. I understand that a Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued. From September 2013 these are £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.

Name of Parent/Carer making application:

Signed: Date:

PLEASE RETURN TO THE SCHOOL RECEPTION. REMEMBER TO INCLUDE ANY SUPPORTING INFORMATION

For official use only

Authorised: For the following dates: ___ / ___ / ___ to ___ / ___ / ___

Unauthorised: Reason:

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.....

Decision taken by:

Students should make every effort to catch up on work missed due to absence, whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. This may involve asking teachers for the materials in advance.

Below is a extract from the 'Frequently Asked Questions' section of the Department for Education publication: Advice on School Attendance, published in 2012

Can a school fine a parent for taking their child on holiday during term time?

Yes.

Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their child aged 5-16, if registered at a school, attends that school regularly. If taking an unauthorised term time holiday is grounds for issuing a penalty notice according to the local authority's code, and if the leave of absence for holiday was not authorised by the school, either the school or the local authority may issue a penalty notice.

****Please note**

'The Local Authority Code of Conduct for the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices in respect of Poor School Attendance and Unauthorised Holidays / Leave of Absence taken in Term-Time states that a parent will not be issued with more than 1 Fixed Penalty Notice in respect of an individual child in any 2-year period. This means that if any parent/carer who has already received a Fixed Penalty Notice then takes their child out of school in term time for a holiday, which falls within 2 years of the date of the last day of absence of the previous holiday, a request will be made to the Local Authority and the matter may be referred to the Magistrate's Court. This could result in a prosecution of up to £1000'.