

SYNERGY SCHOOLS FEDERATION

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

It is important that parents and carers are aware that they are not legally entitled to take their children out of school for the purposes of a family holiday during term time. This has been the case since September 2013 when amendments were made to the School Attendance regulations 2006. These removed references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days.

The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

The latest documentation from the Department for Education (August 2024) states that:

- Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence.
- Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
- If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.
- As headteachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

Penalty Notices

Parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school. Taking a holiday during term time means that children miss important school time - both educationally and for other school activities. Before completing this application, parents/carers are asked to consider the effect on their child's education.

If permission is not granted and your child(ren) do not attend school during the dates you requested, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and a request to issue you with a penalty notice will be made.

The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular child will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same child will be charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. The Local Authority will take legal action if a penalty notice is not paid within 28 days of date of issue. Legal action may result in a fine of up to **£2,500** and a criminal record for each parent/carer. A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

If permission is granted and your child(ren) do not return to school on the agreed date, further absences will not be authorised. You may also be issued with a penalty notice (see above).

It is important to note that any monies collected by the local authority through fixed penalty notices are not retained by the school.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact the school office in the first instance.



APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Name of Pupil (s)

Address

Telephone

I request permission for my child to be absent from school

From To Total number of school days

Exceptional Circumstances for Request

This section must be answered in full by parent/carer

Signature of parent/carer Date

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY

Current Attendance:

This is: Excellent Above average Average Below Average Poor

I have considered carefully your request for leave in term-time and on this occasion I will/will not be authorising your child(ren)'s absence for the following reason (s):-

Seen by Headteacher (signature): Date:

Decision reached: Date reply returned: