



Leave of absence from school

Holidays are fine - just not in term time!

There are 365 days in a calendar year. Your child is expected to attend just 190 days at school. This means there are 175 days for holidays, birthday treats, special events with families, and non-urgent appointments. If you choose to take your child out of school for 10 days during term time, your child can achieve no more than 94.7% school attendance for the academic year. This figure is lower than the national average and the expectations of Trafford and of Pictor School. Ofsted inspectors would class this figure as 'requiring improvement'.

What the law says

The regulations state that Headteachers cannot grant a leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the Headteacher considers there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Clearly there are many situations which may constitute exceptional circumstances, but as a generality I interpret 'exceptional' in this context as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time. This interpretation will have different parameters from one case to another, and whilst it will be important to look at the whole situation in making decisions about any individual request, the normality will be that requests **will be refused**. It is recognised that on occasions there may be extenuating or compassionate reasons for an absence to be authorised.

Issues parents/carers need to be aware of

If the absence request is not authorised by the school and the absence is still taken, this will remain unauthorised.

Any leave of absence that has not been authorised may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution proceedings.

A Fixed Penalty Notice would be issued to each parent of each child of statutory school age and carries a maximum penalty of £120. (E.g. Two parents/carers with two children could incur a total cost of £480).

May I therefore ask that you respect these new regulations under which we must now work, and that if you do need to take your child out of school during term time, you make very clear in your request how the circumstances are exceptional. If this is not clear then under the new legislation, I will not be allowed to grant leave during term time.

Yours sincerely

Beverley Owens
Head teacher



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