

Guidance Notes for Parents requesting Leave in Term Time

1. Parents who want the school to consider granting leave of absence in school term time should read these notes carefully, **complete the attached form and send it to the head teacher**. This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered **well before** the desired period of absence. Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the school's decision regarding their request. Head teachers cannot authorise any leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins.
2. Amendments to the Education Regulations 2006 make it clear that head teachers should only grant a leave of absence during term time if there are exceptional circumstances to justify this. The Department for Education makes it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Head teachers may also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.
3. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time.
4. Staffordshire County Council understands the challenges that some parents face when booking holidays particularly during school holidays. However, we believe that, in order to ensure children receive the best education and prospects that they should be in school during term time.
5. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents need, therefore, to consider very carefully before making any request for leave of absence. In considering a request, the school will take account of: -
 - the **exceptional** circumstances stated that have given rise to the request
 - the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements
 - frequency of similar requests
 - whether the parent made the request in advance
 - Students/pupils on examination courses will **not** normally be granted leave of absence.
6. Where parents have children in more than one school a separate request must be made to each school. The head teacher of each school will make their own decision based on the factors relating to the child at their school. However head teachers may choose to liaise with each other as part of their decision-making process.
7. Should the school decide to grant leave of absence, but the child **does not return to school at the time s/he was expected to** (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave of absence period) and no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
8. As a school we are obliged to inform you that you may be subject to a Penalty Notice if your child's absence from school is unauthorised. This is in line with Staffordshire County Councils Code of Conduct and the "Working Together to Improve School attendance" statutory guidance (effective 19th August 2024). The penalties for unauthorised leave of absence in term time will be:

For a First offence the Penalty Notice fine would be: -

- £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £160 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days.

For a Second offence within 3-years of the first penalty notice being issued, the penalty notice fine would be:

- £160 per parent, per child if paid between 28 days.

Following the second offence every new offence within the 3-year period, will be prosecuted under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996. I must advise you that if the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is £1,000 per parent, per child. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school.

9. The Local Authority will continue to monitor all school absences during term time and support head teachers in challenging parents who ignore the law.

* Generally the DfE states that parents include all those with day to day responsibility for a child.

For More information: - <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/School-attendance.aspx>



REQUEST FOR LEAVE DURING TERM TIME

To the Principal

I request a leave of absence from school during term time for:

Student's Full Name: _____

Year: _____

Address: _____

First date of intended absence: _____

Date of intended return to Academy: _____

Number of days in total: _____

The exceptional circumstances and reason for this request are:-

Signature of 1st parent/carer: _____

Dated: _____

Print Name: _____

Signature of 2nd Parent/Carer: _____

Dated: _____

Print Name: _____

This form should be submitted to the principal as soon as possible and not less than four weeks in advance. The academy will inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.

For Office Use Only

1. Child's current attendance: _____%

2. Previous days leave of absence within Academic Year _____

3. Examination timetable checked?

4. **Approved:** Absence/Attendance Code: **C C1 G H I J1 K M O P Q R S T V W X Y**

Not Approved: Absence Code **G or O**

Reason: In line with Academy policy/other:- _____

Signed: _____ Principal

Dated: _____