

Saltford Primary School
Leave of Absence Request Form



Taking your child out of school during term time may harm your child's academic progress.

Absences may only be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher in **EXCEPTIONAL** circumstances. This applies to all children in the school even if they are under 5 years old.

Circumstances which are notified to the school **after** a decision has been made by the Headteacher will not be considered. Therefore please be certain to provide details of the EXCEPTIONAL circumstances relating to your application below and attach any supporting evidence.

EXCEPTIONAL circumstances no longer cover:-

- Holidays of any description
- Husband/wife/carer work patterns necessitating taking holidays in term times
- Family Birthday celebrations
- Visiting relatives abroad

There are an increasing number of requests for family weddings in term time, often abroad. The day of the wedding can be authorised as it is deemed to be a "one-off" situation BUT only if the school receives confirmation in writing e.g. an invitation outlining the wedding details. Parents/Carers requesting a week's leave of absence to attend a wedding should note that only the day of the wedding can be authorised.

Permission should be applied for giving as much notice as possible for medical appointments including, hospital appointments, hospital stays, dentists etc. Leave will normally be granted when evidence of appointment(s) has been provided.

If permission has **not been granted** then any leave taken will be recorded as **unauthorised**. If the absence is not authorised by the Headteacher you will be notified by letter. Any unauthorised absence will appear in both the school register and in your child's report. Persistent unauthorised absence may result in the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer and possible legal proceedings.

Please read Local Authority leaflet overleaf which explains Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised absences during term time.

This form must be completed and returned to the school no less than 2 weeks before the planned absence. An appointment with the Headteacher must also be made at this time.

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Child/ren's name(s) Class

I request that my child/ren be granted leave of absence from school from:

Date of first day of absence Date return to school

If the absence is for part of a school day, please provide: Time from to

Please give reason for request

.....
.....
.....

Signed:

Date:

For office use only:

Days already taken

Attendance %

AUTHORISED absence of day(s) has been granted; the exceptional reason is:

.....

UNAUTHORISED absence of day(s) as exceptional circumstances / attendance criteria (delete as necessary) have not been met.

PENALTY NOTICES - FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE TAKEN DURING TERM TIME **(s444A and s444B Education Act 1996)**

What are s444A and s444B of the Education Act 1996?

Section 444A and section 444B of the Education Act 1996 give powers to the Local Authority (LA) to issue Penalty Notices where the parent/carer is considered capable of but unwilling to secure an improvement in their child's school attendance.

Why are these powers available?

Reducing absence from school is a key priority at both national and local level. Missing school reduces a pupil's educational attainment and life chances.

What is a Penalty Notice?

A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution and is used to try and secure an improvement in a pupil's school attendance without the need to appear in Court. As long as the penalty is paid the Penalty Notice enables parents or carers to discharge their potential liability for prosecution for the period covered by the Penalty Notice.

What are the costs?

Payment of £120 is required within 28 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice; this sum is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. If the penalty is not paid in full within 28 days the LA is required to commence proceedings in the Magistrates' Court for the original offence of your child's poor school attendance. If you plead guilty or are found guilty the Courts have a wider range of options which could include a maximum fine of £1000. In addition a Parenting Order could be imposed.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent for each child and payment is required for each Penalty Notice issued.

Who issues them?

The Local Authority through the Education Welfare Service.

How are they issued?

By post to your home.

Could I be prosecuted if I pay the penalty but my child is still missing school?

Yes. You will not be prosecuted for the period included in the Penalty Notice – payment discharges your liability in this respect. However, legal proceedings might be considered for further periods of poor attendance not covered by the Penalty Notice, depending upon the circumstances.

When are they issued for unauthorised Leave of Absence?

Penalty Notices are issued for absence taken during term time where a pupil's overall attendance is less than 90% and the leave of absence has not been authorised by the school or an absence has not been requested in advance and pupil has had a minimum of 10 sessions (5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence during the previous six months in the academic year and additional unauthorised absence during the previous twelve months up to and including the day the Education Welfare Service is notified.

What is unauthorised Leave of Absence?

- A parent has made a request for leave of absence in term time and this has not been agreed by the school;
- A parent has not applied leave of absence in advance of the absence (the regulations do not allow retrospective approval); or
- If the parents keep the child away from school for longer than was agreed, the extra time is recorded as unauthorised

When can Leave of Absence be authorised?

Amendments made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances.

Why have I received this leaflet?

This leaflet is sent to parents to inform them of the extended use of Penalty Notices for unauthorised leave of absence or for parents who have requested leave of absence during term time.

If the leave of absence you have requested is not agreed by the school and your child has had a minimum of 10 sessions (5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence during the previous six months in the academic year and additional unauthorised absence during the previous twelve months the Local Authority will be notified and a Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child.

What can I do now?

If the leave of absence that you have requested is not authorised you are advised not to take your child out of school.

Who can I discuss this with?

In the first instance talk to your child's school.