

Leave of Absence Request Form

To be submitted two weeks before the requested date

Taking your child out of school during term time may harm your child's academic progress. Please read the notes (overleaf) carefully before submitting this form as refusal often offends. We aim to be consistent and transparent within the law.

Absences may only be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher in **exceptional circumstances**. This is now different from 'special circumstances' previously considered. Circumstances which are notified to the school or Local Authority **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.

Please read the Local Authority information (overleaf) which explains Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised Leave of Absence during term time.

Name of Child(ren)	
Date of Birth	
Class	
Date of First Day of Absence	
Date of Return	
Number of Days requested	
Known siblings and school(s) attending	

Exceptional Circumstances (reason) for Leave of Absence during term time:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Signed: _____ Date submitted: _____

Print name: _____ Relationship to child(ren) _____

For school use:

Attendance %:

Total sessions pupil absent this academic year:

Total unauthorised absence this year:

Request authorised: Yes/No

Evidence Submitted: Yes/No

Leave of Absence during term time – Important Information

The Department for Education states; every day at school counts enormously and so does every consecutive day attended by pupils. Pupils need to be able to absorb new facts and knowledge, acquire new skills and consolidate before building further and progressing. They simply cannot do so if their structured school terms are disrupted by too many preventable absences. This form replaces the Holiday/Absence Request Form following further guidance from the Department for Education and Wiltshire Council in the summer of 2013.

Absence during term time

Parents do not have a legal right to take children out of school. Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Requests for Leave of Absence

A request for a leave of absence must only be considered if;

- The parent the child normally lives with applies in advance for the absence; and
- There are **exceptional circumstances** for the absence

Exceptional Circumstances

Dictionary definition of exceptional (*Adjective*)

- unusual; not typical;
- forming an exception or rare instance; unusual; extraordinary.

A request for leave of absence could be considered exceptional in the following circumstance;

- For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking leave of absence outside term time at any point in the academic year; Providing written proof respectfully requested
- The terminal illness or bereavement of a parent or sibling if the absence is concurrent.

Any other absence?

There may be other circumstances when a parent may request an absence for their child, which may involve some time away from home. Examples of these include:

- The wedding of a family member
- Family bereavement
- Prison visits

The overriding principle should be that the absence ought not to be authorised if it will have a detrimental effect on the child's education. Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove 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. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence

If the absence has not been authorised by the school and an absence occurs, where the child's total unauthorised absences amounts to 10 or more sessions (5 school days), continuous or aggregated within the previous six months within the current academic year (including the most recent unauthorised absence), schools are expected to notify the Education Welfare Service. **In all circumstances a written application must be made by the parent with whom the child normally resides at least two weeks before the requested leave.** The Headteacher has the discretion to authorise up to ten working days of leave if exceptional circumstances are agreed. The burden of proving this lies with the parent.

Headteachers are not allowed to authorise:

- Availability of cheap holidays or flights
- Availability of desired accommodation
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods
- Overlap with the beginning or end of term

A penalty of £60 will apply if paid within 21 days or £120 up to 28 days. If after 28 days the penalty has not been paid, legal proceedings will be taken through the magistrates' court for the unauthorised absence.

More information is available via our website: www.st-marks.wilts.sch.uk – downloads – Leave of Absence