

Term Time Leave Policy

Introduction

All children of statutory school age who are registered at school must, by law, attend that school regularly. Any absence from school can seriously disrupt a pupil's continuity of learning and have a detrimental effect on their future progress. The guidance is in accordance with the Local Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices which was reviewed and revised in September 2013.

Legislation and guidance

The Governing Body have adopted the Northumberland LA Leave of Absence in Term Time Guidance for Schools 2014 (revised) and we will use the 'Promoting Good Attendance' document as a guide to levels of intervention. This guidance reflects the changes to the Pupil Registration Regulations which came into force September 2013. It should be noted though that following discussions with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), we will continue to advise parents against making requests for absence during term time, but we recognise that there may be exceptional circumstances that the Headteacher may agree.

Leave of absence during term time.

Amendments to the 2006 pupil regulations remove references to family holiday, extended leave and the statutory threshold of ten school days .(Authorised at the discretion of the Head Teacher).

The amendments make clear that:

'Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted under these exceptional circumstances

Leave of absence during term time is entirely at the discretion of the Head Teacher and is not a parental right.

All decisions in relation to whether leave of absence is granted (authorised) or not (unauthorised) will be applied consistently and equitably.

Parents should complete the following application process

- A parent/carer requesting leave of absence during term time should make the application in writing or make an appointment to see the Headteacher at least two weeks in advance
- School should invite the parent/carer into school to discuss the reasons for the application and the impact the absence may have on the child's education
- The school holiday form (Annex A) should be completed by the parent/carer and submitted to school.
- If leave is not granted, the reason for not authorising a request will be clearly stated, explaining why exceptional circumstances have not been met, in addition to the possible consequences of disregarding the refusal to grant absence. i.e. a request to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty notice. All replies should be signed and dated by the Head-teacher/Acting Head

- If leave is granted, the length of authorised absence will be clearly stated including the date the child is expected to return to school including possible consequences if the child fails to return on that date. All replies will be signed and dated by the Head-teacher.
- If a parent /carer removes their child from school without requesting leave of absence or without authorisation from the Head Teacher AND the Head Teacher wishes the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice; the parent will be informed in writing that a request to the Local authority to issue a Penalty Notice is being made.

N.B. A minimum absence of ten sessions (five school days) which are unauthorised must be recorded against the pupils name within a 6-12 week period. This guidance is in accordance with the Local Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices which was reviewed and revised in September 2013

If a child is absent and the parents did not request Leave of Absence?

If the School believes that a child has gone on holiday but the parent has not completed an absence request form, calls home and a visit will be made to the home address during the absence period.

On the child's return to School the Head Teacher will write to the parents giving them the opportunity to explain the situation. Evidence is necessary to show how it is known that the child was on holiday. It may be necessary for a statement from the Head Teacher to be provided.

It is the Head-teachers decision to refer to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued. A Penalty Notice Request Form will need to be submitted with all supporting documentation. These can be obtained from your EWO who will advise you on how to complete the form. If a parent does not pay the Fine court proceedings will be implemented based solely on the information provided by the Head Teacher.

If it is found that fair process has not been followed the Local Authority will not issue the Penalty Notice and the school will be informed.

The school will contact the EWO with any queries regarding the guidance.

Author	Creation Date
Northumberland Local Education Authority] Leave Of Absence In Term Time Guidance For Schools 2014 (Revised)	September 2014
Reviewed	Revision date
School Staff	March 2015
Agreed by Full Governing Body	March 2015
Committee One - Policies and Resources	September 2016, September 2017
Signed	

Annex A
Longhoughton Church of England Primary School

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE - DURING TERM TIME

The 2013 amendments to the 2006 regulations explain clearly that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head teachers should also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Name of pupil
Date of birth
Address
Tutor/Year group
Contact Numbers

I request permission for my child to be granted leave of absence from school between:-

First Day of Absence
Date of Return
Total School Days

Please fully explain the exceptional circumstances relating to the leave of absence that you would like the Head Teacher to consider. (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Declaration

I have read and understand the information regarding leave of absence during school term time, unauthorised absence, Penalty Notice and possible prosecution. I am aware of the possible consequences should I take my child on leave of absence without prior authorisation from the Head Teacher.

Signature _____
Parent / Carer

Date _____