

**Request for authorisation of a**

**Pupil Absence Request For  
Exceptional Circumstances**

**People and Communities Directorate  
Education Welfare Service  
P O Box 51  
Town Hall  
Weston-super-Mare  
Somerset BS23 1ZZ**

**To the Headteacher**

**School**

**I wish to apply for (child name):**

**Class/Tutor Group:**

**To be authorised as being absent from school from: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
(inclusive dates)**

**The exceptional reason why the absence needs to be taken in term time is: (continue on separate sheet if necessary)**

**Please list below any siblings and schools they attend:**

**Signature:  
(parent/carer)**

**Date:**

**NB:** Amendments to the 2006 regulations (2013) make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents do not have the automatic right to withdraw pupils from school and, in law, have to apply for permission in advance. The school will always want to discuss this with you personally.

Please complete this form and send to the Headteacher. You are advised not to make any arrangements until your request has been considered by the school.

This school will not authorise the request for absence from school if your child's attendance is below.....%

Any absence which has not been agreed in advance by the Headteacher is marked as '**Unauthorised Absence**' and may result in a **Penalty Notice being issued (see back of form for details of this)**

**SCHOOL USE ONLY**

**Specify dates unauthorised:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Specify dates authorised:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Headteacher:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**A personal discussion with you is requested**

**Last academic year attendance**

**Please contact:**

**Current school attendance**

## Guidance

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 has been amended (as of 1 September 2013) to prohibit the proprietor (headteacher) of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. The expectation of the Local Authority is that term time holidays should not be planned or booked as a matter of course as they are likely to be **unauthorised** and will lead to the issuing of a penalty notice (fine).

## Exceptional circumstances

Are defined as:

- Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting
- **Exceptional significant** family events or circumstances – these will be considered on an individual basis with you.

The Headteacher will consider every above request individually but the **following will not meet the criteria:**

- Relatives coming to visit
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad
- Family day trips
- Visiting family/friends that have different half term holidays and may include refusal to attend family weddings and visits to see family abroad.

Authorised officers have the discretion to issue a penalty notice without warning where the parent has chosen to take the child on leave during term time without authorisation or evidence is subsequently found to suggest a child was away from school with the knowledge of the parent and does not meet the statutory defences mentioned below.

## Penalty Notices

Through section 444A and section 444B of the Education Act 1996, it has become possible that certain cases of unauthorised absence can be dealt with by way of a Penalty Notice. Penalty Notices require **each parent** of a child of compulsory school age, whose attendance has been unsatisfactory, to pay a penalty, currently £80.00 if paid within 21 days or £160.00 if paid within 28 days. A second penalty notice within a 3-year period for the same child will be a flat £160. At third or subsequent penalty notice within 3 years will result the case being escalated to the Magistrates Court, where fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

If you do not pay the Penalty Notice, such cases you will be automatically summonsed to appear in Court for an offence under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 and can result in a criminal conviction recorded against you.

Courts have a wider range of sentencing options, which could include a maximum fine of up to £1000.

The only statutory defences to the offence under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 are:

- The child was absent for medical reasons
- The LEA failed to provide transport when required to do so
- The absences were due to religious observance
- You had permission of the school or there was an unavoidable cause