



Updated September 2023

Dear Parents / Guardians

From September 2013 there was a change in the School Attendance Regulations. There is no longer an automatic right to take your child out of school during term time. Headteachers are now only allowed to authorise any leave of absence when an application has been made in advance by the parent / guardian with whom the child is normally resident and it is felt to be for an exceptional circumstance. The annual family holiday would not be deemed an exceptional circumstance.

Applications will be looked at individually on merit and, in the case of an event that has to be booked, the request needs to be made prior to the booking. Factors taken into consideration by the Headteacher as to whether authorisation can be given will include:

- If it is necessary for the child to be in attendance at the event.
- If it is highly unlikely that the event will occur again in a child's school life.
- If the event cannot be organised outside of the school term.
- If the event is necessary to the health and wellbeing of the child.
- If taking part in the event will be of greater value to the child than attending school.
- If the child will not be disadvantaged by not being in school for the period of the event.
- The child's previous attendance history.
- The age of the child and their stage of education.
- The time of year (beginning of academic year, exam times etc).

If you consider that your request falls into this category, you will need to complete the form on the reverse of this letter. A response will be sent to you as soon as possible. If the absence requested is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance, and you nevertheless take your child out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and Shropshire Council's Education Access Service will be informed. In this instance the Council may serve a Fixed Penalty Notice.

There will always be exceptions, particularly where a child or family have been through a difficult or distressing time, please contact me directly in such a case.

Leave of absence taken during the school term is extremely disruptive for both pupils and teaching staff and we strongly recommend that it should be avoided. Children returning from any absence are unprepared for the lessons which build on the teaching they have missed. Teachers then have to give more time to help individual children catch up on missed work and this poses a potential risk of the under achievement of other students in the class.

I hope you will support our efforts to raise attendance and attainment at our school.

Yours sincerely

**Mr Lee Tristham**  
Headteacher

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**Request for Pupil Leave of Absence in Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances**

Headteachers can only authorise any absence when an application has been made in advance by the parent/carer with whom the child is normally resident and it is felt to be for an exceptional circumstance. An annual family holiday would not be deemed an exceptional circumstance.

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Full name of child(ren)  | Address:      |
| _____  | _____         |
| _____  | _____         |
| _____  | _____         |
| Reason for application and dates _____   |               |
| _____  |               |
| _____  |               |
| Parent's forename _____  | Surname _____ |
| Parent's forename _____  | Surname _____ |
| Signature of parent(s)/carer(s) _____  | Date: _____   |
| The headteacher may take into account whether:   |               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is highly unlikely that the event will occur again in a child's school life.</li><li>• It is necessary for the child to be in attendance at the event.</li><li>• The event <b>cannot</b> be organised outside of the school term.</li><li>• Taking part in the event will be of greater value to the child than attending school.</li></ul> |               |

**Office use only:** Authorised Unauthorised

Signed .....(Headteacher) Date: .....

**WARNING**

If this requested period of absence has not been authorised, details will be passed to Shropshire Council's Education Access Service. The Council may, in the following circumstances, issue a formal Warning, serve a Fixed Penalty Notice or take court action in respect of non-school attendance for this and any future unauthorised absence:

- Parents have not sought permission from the headteacher before taking their child out of school for a holiday in term time
- The headteacher has refused the request but the absence occurs anyway; or
- A pupil has not returned to school by the agreed date with no satisfactory explanation