



LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

SANDON PRIMARY ACADEMY

Mrs R Beckett (Principal)

Review date: September 2024

Can I take my child out of school for a family holiday?

No. The Principal cannot and will not authorise school (or other educational establishment) absence purely for the reason of a family holiday. If you feel you have an exceptional circumstance you must speak to the Principal prior to making any arrangements or taking any absence.

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their children receive education in accordance with section 7 of the Education Act 1996 and if on a school roll that they regularly attend school.

There is, however, a discretionary power held by the Principal to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances.

Please note: This is not an entitlement and a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.

The Principal will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a child's education.

Please note: That supporting documents to aid decision making must be submitted at the time of your request for absence.

Please note also: We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from their school first. The Principal cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstances. If your request is authorised, you are required to ensure your child catches up on any missed school work. This is your responsibility and school are not obliged to provide work for your child to complete. Any unauthorised absence will be recorded on your child's attendance records. This may result in legal proceedings against you, either through a Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.

How do I request authorisation from the headteacher to take my child out of school?

In order to acquire authorisation for you to remove your child from school you will need to fill in a request form and then take in to the school for the attention of the Principal.

The Principal then has to make a decision based on the information provided in the authorisation form, in addition to the evidence you have provided.

Please note: We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from their school first. The Principal cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstances.

What evidence is needed?

The evidence you will need to provide depends entirely on what type of leave from school you are applying for.

A wedding abroad needs evidence of the event and can include invitations and evidence of travel/accommodation reservations.

For time off to attend a funeral you may even be required to provide a death certificate.

The evidence you will be required to provide will be specifically asked for by the school. If you are unable to provide evidence then the request will be refused.

What is absence from school for exceptional circumstances?

In order for consideration to be given, requests for absence must be for exceptional circumstances only.

The provision for Headteachers to authorise absence purely for the purpose of a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. <
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of 1 to 4 above, the Principal agrees to consult with education welfare prior to any authorisation being given to the parent.

Please note: Evidence would be required in each case.

If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times, the Principal must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

- The first half term of any academic year (applies to all pupils)
- Year six transition day (for pupils in year six)
- Year six SATs week (for pupils in year six)
- Year nine options time (for pupils in year nine)
- At any time during years 10 and 11 (for all pupils in these year groups)
- At any time specified by the school (this will be communicated to parents by each school).

What are the penalties unauthorised absence?

Any period of unauthorised leave may result in you as a parent receiving a penalty notice fine.

The Principal will continue to be the only person able to authorise leave in term time, but this will apply only in exceptional circumstances.

Any leave taken which is recorded as unauthorised absence by the school may be referred by the Principal into the Local Authority and the following actions may be applied:

- A Penalty Notice payable of **a £60 or £120 fine.**
- Prosecution under s444(1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to **£1,000.**