



Silverhill Primary School

Policy for - Leave of Absence (pupils)

Policy No. G13	Issue date March 2010	Review date March 2011	Page 1 of 4
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Missing school for any reason can deprive your child of educational opportunities and hamper their progress at school. Children have a right to an education and, by denying children their rights, can have a long lasting effect on ensuring children meet their true potential. There is a strong correlation between good school attendance and academic achievement

Nationally Government Policy is insisting that schools minimise the amount of teaching and learning time lost as a result of term time holidays and schools are now expected to adopt a more challenging response to requests for leave of absence for holidays in term time.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and the accompanying guidance make it clear that parents/carers **do not** have a legal right to take their child out of school for holidays in term time.

There are 190 statutory school days a year so there are 175 other days available for holidays that would not have a negative effect on a child's education. By taking a child on holiday in term time they may be getting an unspoken message that school is not important.

In conjunction with all the primary schools in the locality the governors have agreed that absence from school will only be authorised for a maximum of 5 days in the academic year from 1st September 2010.

Leave of absence requests for the following reasons are **not** considered to be **special or exceptional**:

- Availability of cheap holidays and cheap travel arrangements
- Poor weather experienced in holiday periods
- Overlapping with beginning or end of term.

NO leave of absence will be authorised for the period from the start of the school year until the October half-term (1st September to 22nd October 2010)

After the October half-term leave of absence may be granted in **special or exceptional** circumstances only at the Head teacher's discretion.

School will consider:

- How long is it for and how much will it disrupt the child's education
- The overall attendance record of the child
- The nature of the circumstance, such as trauma or death within the immediate family where an immediate holiday may help the child deal better with the situation
- Previous similar requests.

School will not, as a rule, grant leave:

- If a child's attendance record is less than 95%
 - If the period coincides with the start of term, or is near to, or coincides with in-school tests, SATS, or other significant events on the school calendar
 - If there are patterns of non-attendance or if there is Education Welfare Service (EWS) involvement
 - If the school has concerns over a child's welfare and safety.
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- As responsible parents it is essential that you are aware of the importance of ensuring your child's regular, uninterrupted school attendance and the potential consequences for failing to do so
 - As parents you do not have the right or entitlement to expect leave to be granted in term time and, in some circumstances, a child may lose their place at school if certain conditions are not fulfilled
 - Children may be reported as 'missing' to the relevant agencies if they fail to return to school by an agreed date whether the holiday has been authorised or not by the Head teacher.

Parents should ...

- Always fill in a Leave of Absence request form provided by the school - failure to do so may result in legal sanctions being taken against the parent[s] - and discuss any application with the school's Head teacher
- Consider very carefully the implications of taking a child out of school in term time and the impact on the child's learning.

The Education Welfare Service will work in partnership with schools to ensure that, if parents are found to be taking their children out of school without the Head teacher's authorisation, the Education Welfare Officer for the school will conduct an investigation which may lead to a parent[s] receiving a Penalty Notice.

The Penalty Notice will be issued by the Education Welfare Service and will be of a value of £50 for each parent for each child.

- If this is not paid within 28 days the liability will rise to £100 per parent per child.
- If this is not paid within 42 day of the original date of issue the matter will then be placed before the Magistrates' Court. Conviction at the Courts will ensure the parent[s] receiving a criminal record and may also result in a fine being imposed on the parent[s].

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Important Information For Parents/Carers

- **There is no automatic right to absence for a family holiday.**
- Requests for leave of absence should be sent to the school **no less than** four weeks before the start of the period of absence.
- Authorisation during SATs and in the **first half term** of any new school placement **cannot** be granted
- Any requests for extended leave will result in an interview with a senior member of staff to look at options for ensuring continuity of education
- Any leave taken without filling in a request form or entering a late request form will be unauthorised

I wish to apply for leave of absence from school to be granted to:

Name of Child..... Class/ Form Group.....

Dates of Proposed Absence: From.....To:.....
(1st day of absence) (last day of absence)

Reason for Proposed Absence (please tick the appropriate box)

a) Unexpected special family circumstances
(please make an appointment to see a member of staff to discuss)

b) Request for Extended Leave due to special circumstances
(please make an appointment to see the Head Teacher)

Total Days Requested

Total Days Taken Previously This Academic Year

Signature of Parent/Carer.....

Consequences for parents taking children on holiday in term time which are not authorised by the school MAY result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority

For School Use Only

Previous Holiday Checked?

Attendance %

Interview Offered to Parent/Carer? Y/N Date:.....

Authorised? Y/NHead Teacher. Date:.....

Parent informed by letter.Yes/No ... Date

Calculation Chart – Leave of Absence in Term time

The merits of each individual request should be evaluated by providing answers to ALL the following questions and scoring accordingly....

	Points Possible	Points allocated	Total
At which stage/Year Group of their education is the pupil?	Children of Compulsory school age in any year group = 4 points		
What is the level of attendance of this particular pupil?*	70% to 80% = 4pts 80% to 85% = 3pts 85% to 93% = 2pts 93% to 95% = 1 pt		
How close are they to a major exam/SATS assessment or internal school assessment?	More than 16 wks = 1pt 8 – 16 weeks = 2pts 2 – 8 weeks = 3pts less than 2 weeks = 4pts Exam & SATs period 8pts		
How much leave has already been authorised in current academic year?***	8 or more = 4pts 5 to 7 days = 3pts 2 to 4 days = 2pts 1 to 3 days = 1pts		
Any special mitigating circumstances/ aspects of the holiday which can be classed as part of that pupil's curriculum requirements (and work set to satisfy these) as below:	Subtract 2 points from total.		
Details of mitigation ...			

DELETE WHERE APPROPRIATE:- REQUEST APPROVED / REQUEST DENIED

Note. Leave for Family Holiday where the total number of points exceeds 7 **should not be authorised by the school**. The only variation to the above would be where there are, in the opinion of the Head Teacher, 'exceptional circumstances' including religious and cultural considerations.

*Where the level of attendance is below 70% at the time of the request for leave of absence, it should not be authorised as the LA may well be in the process of prosecuting the parents.

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