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***Please submit application at least 2 weeks in advance of absence requested (please see notes overleaf)***

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| **Application Form for Absence in Term Time**  **St Mary’s CE Infant and The Batt CE Primary Schools** |

**Your legal responsibilities**

Leave of absence should not be taken in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. We publish the dates of school terms well ahead. This is to help you plan your holidays outside of term time. **You have a legal duty to make sure your child attends school regularly and punctually**. Schools have a duty to ensure that children attend school. The school and Oxfordshire County Council monitor your child’s attendance and will take action if your child has 10 or more unauthorised sessions, including unauthorised holidays and late, after the register closes.

**How absence is authorised**

**We are not able to grant leave of absence simply because a holiday is cheaper in term-time, or more convenient work-wise**. To ensure that we comply with these regulations, parents/carers requesting leave of absence will need to detail the exceptional reasons below (attach a letter if additional space is needed), in order that these can be assessed.

I request leave of absence for (child’s name) ........................................................ (tutor group/ class) ................. for

………. days from ………….......................... to …………………….............., returning to school on ...............………………..…...

***Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.***

These are exceptional circumstances because ………..........................................................................................................

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| **Siblings:** | Does your child have a secondary/primary school sibling?  (*Please tick appropriate box*) | Yes |  | No |  |

If yes, please state name of sibling …………………………..………….. and secondary/primary school ……………………………………………...

Signed …………………………………………….......................................... Date …………………..............

**PTO**

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

**Absences to date (days): ………………………… Percentage Attendance: ………………………….**

**Decision: Authorised / Unauthorised Signed: (Headteacher)**

**Term-time Leave of Absence**

**What are my responsibilities for my child’s attendance?**

As a parent, you are legally responsible for making sure your child gets a suitable full-time education, usually from the age of 5 to 16. For most parents, this will mean making sure your child is in school every day except when:

* Your child is too ill to go to school.
* You have permission for a leave of absence from your child’s school for them not to attend. You should only ask for this in exceptional circumstances.
* Your religious body has a day especially for religious observance.

**If my child needs to be absent from school, what do I need to do?**

You should contact their school as early as possible on the first day of absence to explain why. If you do not, your child’s school will contact you on the first morning of their absence to find out why your child is not in school. All parents can request a ‘leave of absence’ for their child which gives them permission to be absent from school. Your child’s school has the final say over whether to approve the request and for how long your child can be absent.

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| **Exceptional Circumstances**  It is at the school’s discretion to decide which circumstances are ‘exceptional’. Examples of circumstances that are not exceptional may include:   * Cheap holidays/flights or holidays/flights that have already been paid for * Relatives visiting or visiting relatives * Absence that coincides with important school events such as the start of term or exams.   As a general guideline, exceptional absence circumstances usually apply only to immediate family. Requests for leave related to extended family and friends are likely to be refused. |

**What if I take my child on an unauthorised absence?**

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

* Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
* Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
* Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
* Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days. The fines are per child, per parent.

**Notices to improve**

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

* Details of the pupil’s attendance record and of the offences
* The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/7)
* Details of the support provided so far
* Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
* A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn’t improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
* A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
* The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

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| You can find out more about the rules around term-time absence in the following  [Guide for Parents on School Attendance](https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2022/12/aaa-guide-for-parents-on-school-attendance.pdf), [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance__applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf) and our School Attendance Policy |