

Acle St Edmund C of E Primary School

Leave of Absence Entitlement

You are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly.

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Applications for leave of absence will be looked at on a case by case basis.

Examples of what might be considered as such could include:

- Service personnel returning from / scheduled to embark on a tour of duty abroad.
- Where a period of leave has been recommended as part of a parent's or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. Evidence may be requested from qualified professionals, such as a doctor.
- Attendance at the wedding / funeral of a close family member (usually one day)

Other times when permission would be given would be for educational activities such as music exams, religious observance or sporting competitions.

The school will **not** accept as an exceptional circumstance the fact that a holiday is cheaper during term time or is being taken as a birthday treat. The school will **not** authorise requests where a holiday booking has already been made.

Before completing this application we would advise that you consider very seriously how the absences will affect your child's education. If you do need to take your child out of school during term time, please respect the regulations under which we must now work and **make very clear on the 'Leave of Absence' form how the circumstances are exceptional**. If this is not clear, the leave will not be authorised.

The government advises that any refusal of leave of absence must be recorded as unauthorised by the school on the student's records. As you may be aware unauthorised absences may result in legal proceedings against you either through a Fixed Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.

Fixed Penalty Notices

With the implementation of the Anti Social Behaviour Act (2003) the Local Authority has statutory powers to use Penalty Notices to help tackle irregular school attendance and unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the school has not given permission for or the parent/carer has been unable to provide a reason for the absence, which is acceptable to the school.

The school will discuss with the Local Authority any cases of unauthorised absence and whether the issuing of a Penalty Notice would be appropriate. A Penalty Notice is an alternative to a prosecution to the offence and can be issued when it is felt that parents/carers are failing in their legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly.

The penalty is in the form of a £60 fine per child payable within 21 days; this increases to £120 payable per child within 28 days. Failure to pay usually results in prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have:

- 1 9 consecutive sessions (4.5 days) of unauthorised absence where some or all of the absence may be attributed to an unauthorised holiday in term time (for absences from 1 September 2017); or
- 2 15% unauthorised absence over a period of 6 school weeks for reasons other than unauthorised term time holiday

The intervention could be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Any pupil at Acle Primary who meets either of the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

Acle St Edmund C of E Primary School



Request for Leave of Absence

How to use this form:

- Use for all absence other than sickness
- If possible, return to the school **at least three weeks before** the date of requested absence

Guidance:

- Absences can only be authorised by the Headteacher
- Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during school term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** (please read notes overleaf)
 - The Headteacher will consider the following points before authorising leave:
 - The child's previous attendance history / The time of year (SATs or assessments taking place etc)

Parent/Guardian to complete this section:

Name of child:	Class:
Is this the first request for absence this academic year?	Yes / No
Dates requested:	Number of school days requested:
Reason for application (please attach a letter or supplementary evidence as necessary):	
Signed:	
Date:	
Title:	Print name:
Daytime contact number:	
Email address:	

School office to complete this section:

Attendance last academic year.	%	less than 90% puts a child in the " persistent absentee " category
Current Attendance:	%	

Headteacher to complete this section:

Your request is approved and the absence as set out above is duly authorised	
<p>I am unable to authorise this absence as it does not meet our criteria. This absence will be recorded as unauthorised.</p> <p>A fine may be issued by the local authority as a result of this decision if 9 consecutive sessions (4.5 days) are unauthorised, partly or wholly due to a term time holiday (Local Authority guidelines from 1 September 2017)</p>	
Signed:	Headteacher Mrs Clarke Date: