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Application for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances during term time

In September 2013, the government changed the regulations for all schools in relation to authorising pupils' leave of absence during term time. Regulations now state that applications for leave must be made in advance by a parent with whom the child lives and can only be authorised by the school in **exceptional circumstances**.

The following are examples of the criteria for leave of absence, which may be considered as 'exceptional'.

- Service personnel returning from active deployment.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave arrangements is part of the organisational or company policy. **This would need to be evidenced by confirmation from the organisation/company.**
- Where leave is recommended as part of a parent's or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems.

Evidence must be provided.

This is not an exhaustive list and the Headteacher will consider the individual circumstances of each case. Leave will not be granted on the basis of attendance record, academic performance or the experience being offered and the ability to access a reduced cost holiday does not constitute an exceptional circumstance. Where the Headteacher feels that there may be exceptional circumstances that do not fit the criteria they may refer to the local authority for advice. The decision of the headteacher is however final.

Where a child is taken out of school for the purpose of leave of absence in term time without the permission of the school, the absence will be coded as unauthorised and as such may result in a **penalty notice, issued by Bradford Council of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days**. Penalties are applied by the local authority and as such are not at the discretion of the Headteacher. If a penalty notice is not paid, the matter may be taken to prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Whilst this letter simply explains changes arising nationally, I would reiterate that taking pupils on leave during term time interrupts learning and can disrupt educational progress, we hope our policy sends a clear message that 'every day counts at school'. We trust that serious consideration is given to any application for leave of absence for the reasons outlined above.

If you still wish to apply for leave of absence for your child then please complete the attached form, stating the exceptional circumstances which make the leave during term time necessary.

Applications should be completed at least 2 weeks before the leave of absence begins.



APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM HOTHFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Pupils attend school for a maximum of 190 days each academic year. Full attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. Bradford Council expects all parents/guardians to ensure that their children attend school whenever possible. Absences due to holidays, taken during term time can seriously impact on a pupil's academic attainment. The law states that head teachers can **only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances**.

If your child's leave of absence is not authorised or your child fails to return on the agreed date, then you could be subject to a Penalty Fine of £60 (per parent, per child) being issued by Bradford.

If you wish to apply for leave of absence for your child, please complete this form and return it to school at least two weeks before the intended departure clearly stating the exceptional circumstances that mean the absence from school is unavoidable.

PARENTS SECTION

| | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------|
| Surname of child | | First name | |
| Date of birth | | Class | |
| Surname of parent/guardian | | First name of parent/guardian | |
| Address of child | | Telephone number | |
| | | Has leave for sibling also been requested from Aire View? | |
| Reason for Leave of Absence | | | |
| Length of absence applied for (number of school days) | | Destination | |
| Date of departure | | Date due back in school | |
| Exceptional Circumstances (Continue overleaf if necessary) Please arrange to meet with the Headteacher if you would prefer to discuss exceptional circumstances | (NB: Cost and convenience of holiday are not considered to be exceptional circumstances) | | |
| Parent's/guardian's signature | | | Date |

SCHOOL SECTION

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|------------------|------------------|
| Number of previous applications granted | | Attendance so far this year/ last year | This Year | Last Year |
| | | | | |
| Days authorised | | Days not authorised | | |
| Head Teacher's signature | | Date | | |