

## Leave of Absence During Term Time

**Children must attend school regularly to achieve their potential. Children who miss out on school can feel vulnerable and left behind. Absence in term time can be very disruptive and can affect your child's education.**

“Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher should determine the amount of days a child can be absent should the leave be granted” – *DFE Guidelines*

**Fixed Penalty Notices for 5 or more sessions of unauthorised absence within a period of 10 school weeks:**

### Within a 3-year period:

The first penalty notice is **£160** if paid within 28 days, reduced to **£80** if paid within 21 days.

A second penalty notice is **£160** to be paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued. **Legal action** may result (for example, prosecution).

### Our policy

We follow Durham County Council policy when dealing with absence during term time. Parents do not have the right to remove their children from school during term time. The head teacher will decide if the absence meets exceptional circumstances.

Absence during term time will not be authorised under the following circumstances:

- The reason given is not exceptional – Once the reason given is deemed to be exceptional then other factors taken into consideration will be:
- Will the leave be during national or school tests or examinations or in the run up to this time?
- Is a child's absence is below 95%?

Absence in term time will only be authorised if parents or carers make a request to the school, and that school feel the criteria listed are met

**The cost, convenience or availability of a particular holiday will not be taken into consideration.**

If an absence had not been authorised by the Head teacher and parents or carers remove their child from school, their absence will be recorded unauthorised in the register.

## Fixed Penalty Notices for irregular attendance at school Important information for parents

### 1 Overview

Penalty notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution where parents have failed to ensure their child attends school regularly. They can be used in cases where absence has not been authorised by a head teacher.

The notices are used to prevent the need for court action, for example, when support has not been engaged with or is not appropriate (for example, leave of absence during term time). **Changes from September 2024 are shown below.**

### 2 Leave

Head Teachers are unable to grant leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation **would not** constitute an exceptional circumstance.

### 3 Absence

A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued if there are **5 days / 10 sessions** of absence in a period of **10 school weeks** (where absence has not been authorised).

A notice may be issued where the 5-day level of absence has not been reached, for example, if there are several periods of leave.

### 4 Amount

Within a 3-year period:

The first penalty notice is **£160** if paid within 28 days, reduced to **£80** if paid within 21 days.

A second penalty notice is **£160** to be paid within 28 days.

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