

Holidays in Term-time (term time leave requests) **Advice to Parents**

We recognise that there can be seemingly good reasons to take a holiday during term-time. However, it is important that parents/carers carefully consider the implications of taking their child out of school during term time. Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on work they have missed. This can affect test and examination results and your child's future career prospects. Pupils who have difficulty with school work find it harder to cope when they return to school. Some pupils may find it difficult to renew friendships.

The law does not say that pupils have an automatic right to take an authorised leave of absence from school for holidays during term-time. However parents can ask a school to authorise absence for this purpose.

In "special circumstances" schools may authorise, in advance, such requests for leave totalling up to ten school days in a school year. Any requests for leave should come from a parent/carer with whom the child normally resides, and must demonstrate "special circumstances". The issues that the school should take into account when considering a request for leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday include:

- (i) Any holidays already taken in the school year
- (ii) Age of the child and national curriculum year
- (iii) The child's general absence/attendance record
- (iv) Proximity of SATs/GCSE examinations
- (v) Length of the proposed leave
- (vi) The child's ability to catch up the work missed
- (vii) The child's educational needs
- (viii) General welfare of the pupil
- (ix) Special circumstances of the request
- (x) Purpose of the leave

If a request for leave is authorised and the child stays away from school for more than the authorised period, the extended period of leave will be recorded as unauthorised absence and noted on your child's record. This may be used in any legal action taken for poor attendance and when issuing a penalty notice.

If the school refuses a request for term-time leave and your child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and noted on your child's record. This may be used in any legal action taken for poor attendance and when issuing a penalty notice. For holiday requests of more than 10 school days, a school can only authorise requests in "exceptional circumstances". The LA would advise that examples of what may be considered to amount to exceptional circumstances are cases where:

- Forces Personnel are on leave from a foreign posting
- Parents' have significant employment restrictions (the school may ask for evidence from your employer)
- Significant family events or circumstances - these will be considered on an individual basis with you.

This is not an exhaustive list and Head teachers must consider the individual circumstances of each case when making a decision on this matter.

Children should attend school for 190 days each year, and every day is important. Please help them not to miss any of this valuable time.

We hope that when you have read this advice you will consider that your child's education is too important to take holidays during term time.

Ruishton Church of England Primary School

Request for an absence in term time

Parent Form

If the school refuses your request and the child is taken out of school this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and noted on your child's record

I wish to apply for the following child(ren) to be authorised as absent from school from to inclusive for the purpose of my annual family holiday/other purpose (Please delete one)

Name of child(ren)	Class
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Special circumstances: Why does this absence need to occur in term time?

Signature

Date

Please return this to school well in advance of your intended holiday/absence

In making the decision to authorise or not authorise the request, on the basis that this is the sole family holiday, or other educational purpose, the Headteacher will consider carefully the following questions;

- Does the holiday have to be taken in term time?
- Are there compassionate grounds? (eg family wedding, funeral)
- Has the child been excluded during the course of the year?
- What will be the effect of the timing of the holiday on the child's education? (eg beginning of school year, run up to tests or exams)
- Is the pupil taking part in an educational activity. (eg county or national sporting event)

When we receive a request for a term time holiday/absence, our decision to authorise it or not will also be based upon the child's attendance record over the past year. It is unlikely that a holiday will be authorised if the level of attendance is below the Government target of 90%. Equally, an attendance level above this target is no guarantee that the holiday request will be automatically authorised.