



Leave of Absence due to Exceptional Circumstances Form (part of our overall Attendance Policy)

Ely Schools Partnership - Attendance Matters

As an Ely Schools partnership we continue to focus our attention on attendance. We are keen to ensure that we promote the highest attendance possible for all our young people as this is a fundamental life skill that will ensure young people's future success. Not only is it vital that our young people establish the very best habits and routines to ensure their success as future employees but there is also very clear national data that clearly shows the impact that poor attendance has on young people achieving the best possible outcomes and educational achievements. In short, if young people are not at school, we cannot teach them and this will affect their academic achievement at all levels.

As a result of this all the schools in the partnership continue to take a very firm and consistent view when parents seek permission for an absence from school for their child due to circumstances other than genuine illness. **All parents can expect that all requests from parents seeking permission for leave of absence for their child will be refused and therefore unauthorised except where there are exceptional circumstances.**

Unauthorised Absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and the parent/carer or if the child is away from school without good reason even with the support of a parent/carer (eg: shopping or a birthday).
- Holidays taken within the school term (except in exceptional circumstances agreed by the Head teacher) will be deemed as unauthorised absence. The expectation of the Local Authority is that term time holidays should not be planned or booked as they are likely to lead to the issuing of a penalty notice. Parents/carers who take their children on unauthorised, term time holidays and/or whose child is persistently absent over a given period, may be issued with a penalty notice or subject to court proceedings for failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Any parent who takes a child out of school for term time leave for 6 consecutive sessions (3 days) or more over a 4 week period, not authorised by the school (under exceptional circumstances rule), may receive a Penalty Notice. Therefore Penalty Notices will be issued for single event absences of at least 3 consecutive school days or more where these absences are unauthorised because they are neither exceptional nor unavoidable. The absences must be recorded with a 'G' code in the attendance register. Such cases will have to be supported by evidence of parents being warned about a potential Penalty Notice. In our school, the head teacher's decision not to authorise a holiday at the bottom of this special leave of absence form, will serve as the penalty warning.

Parents may be liable to a Penalty Notice which is £120 per parent, per child, reduced to £60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days. Non payment of the Penalty Notice within 28 days may be subject to court proceedings for failing to ensure the regular school attendance of their child(ren), which could result in a fine of up to £1,000.

- Exceptional circumstances for absence will be considered on an individual basis but the following will not meet the criteria:
 - Cheaper holidays in England or abroad
 - Visiting family. friends who have different half term holiday dates
 - Family weddings for more than 2 days or visits to see family abroad
 - Relatives coming to visit

The Headteacher will regularly collect attendance data and will use this data during meetings with the school's Education Welfare Officer. These meeting will agree on attendance thresholds and targets and will identify respective tasks and follow-up actions for both the school and the EWO. Absence below 90% is deemed as persistent absenteeism.



CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Request for Authorised Leave of Absence of Pupil from School

IMPORTANT:

This form should be completed and signed by the parent or person having charge of the pupil. It should be returned to the Headteacher for authorisation before the proposed period of leave.

To the Headteacher, Ely St John's Community Primary School

I (name of applicant)

have read the school's Attendance Policy and request that the Headteacher would consider authorising leave of absence as follows:

Name of child/ren:

Exceptional Reason/s for Term Time Leave of Absence:

Proposed Dates for Leave of Absence:

(date) to (date)

Signed: Relationship to pupil:

Headteacher's decision:

The above-detailed request for authorised leave of absence has/has not been granted.

Number of Days Authorised:

Number of Days Unauthorised:

Attendance to date

Previous Leave checked _____

Signed: Date:

Notes: