

Absence From School

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 allowed Headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in 'special circumstances' of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers could also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances. These regulations have now been amended and a new legal position established.

All references to family holidays and extended leave as well as the previous statutory threshold of ten school days have now been **removed** from the regulations. The amendments make clear that Headteachers **may not grant any leave of absence** during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances.

The Government is determined to prevent families from taking their children on holiday during term time and is making Headteachers accountable for this. At Honywood we continue to have a small but significant number of families who make applications for their children to miss school so that family holidays can be taken. The reasons families give typically fall into three categories. Sometimes families are forced into a holiday during term time because the employer of one of the parents/carers will not allow a holiday during the school break. On fewer occasions, holidays are requested as a result of exceptional family events that could be viewed as 'one-off' events. However, the most common reason for families taking holidays during term time are the cost of holidays being so much greater during school breaks.

Under the new regulations, it is hard to see how we could authorise a holiday because it is cheaper during term time. It is less clear as to whether issues created by a parental employer could be regarded as exceptional and my current view is that these will need to be looked at on a case by case basis.

We aim to publish term dates two academic years in advance. Once established, these dates are shared through Honywood Gazette and are also published on our website, so that everyone can see where school terms begin and end. Can we ask that families continue to give a very high level of consideration to any requests you may make to take family holidays during term time, ensuring that you do so only **under exceptional circumstances** as under the new regulations you could be fined if you remove your child from school for more routine holiday provision.

To apply for exceptional circumstances leave of absence during term time, please complete the accompanying application form.



APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

I hereby make application for leave of absence from school for my child (one form required per child):

Date of application _____

Name of Learner _____

Learning Group _____

From Honywood School between the following dates:

First Day of Leave _____

Date of Return to School _____

Total number of school days

Reason for holiday to be taken during term time (Please continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary, and please note that circumstances should be exceptional)

I certify that I am the parent/carer of the child.

Signed: _____

Please print _____

Address: _____

Office Use only:

Date application received _____

Cohort Leader and/or Learning Group Leader comment

Approved by:

Cohort Leader _____

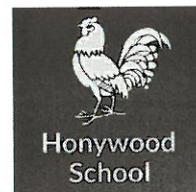
Headteacher _____

Total sessions (ie: half days) absence this year to date.

Total unauthorised absences this year to date.

Letter sent:

Entered onto SIMS



Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you for your application for absence from school during term time for a family holiday.

Parents should not normally take their children on holidays in term time. There is no legal right to do so. Agreement to each request is at my discretion, acting on behalf of the Governing Body as per the Pupil Registration Regulations 2006 – amended 2016.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken any way, a case could be referred to the Education Welfare Service who may issue a Penalty Notice of up to £100 to each parent for each child taken out of school.

As I am sure you appreciate, good attendance at school makes an important contribution to success. When learners miss school, it is very hard to maintain continuity in their learning, making it more difficult for them to make connections between different topics that they are studying. Absence can also have an adverse effect on relationships that learners are developing with their peers.

In planning any future holidays, please consider these points before coming to a final decision to take your child out of school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "James Saunders". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial 'J' and 'S'.

James Saunders
Headteacher