

Leave of absence requests

At Katharine Lady Berkeley's School, we expect students to attend every day that the school is open unless a reason acceptable to the school is given and we are able to authorise the absence.

Head teachers have the discretion to authorise holiday during term-time in exceptional circumstances. The requirement for exceptional circumstances means that the vast majority of requests will be refused and, if the holiday is taken anyway, this will constitute unauthorised absence, which may result in the issue of a penalty notice to each parent in respect of each absent child.

The Facts

Having 10 days' absence in an academic year means that the maximum attendance your child can achieve is 94.7%. Katharine Lady Berkeley's School expects that all students will achieve a minimum of 96% attendance.

If your child is absent for a further 10 days (a total of 20 days' absence), their overall annual attendance would drop to just 89.5%. A student with 90% or below is identified as a '**Persistent Absentee**'.

As a parent/carer, you have a legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school regularly. A parent/carer who takes their child/children out of school without authorisation could be deemed to be failing in their responsibility to ensure regular attendance at school. This is contrary to Section 444 of The Education Act 1996. Legal proceedings can be instigated against parents/ carers by way of:

- Prosecution in the Magistrates Court which could result in a fine of up to £1000, or;
- The issue of a Penalty Notice under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. This is £60 per parent for each child, if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 per parent for each child if paid between 21 and 28 days. Failure to pay can result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

What are 'Exceptional' Reasons?

Each request is considered individually and the reason and duration of the request will be taken into account. A single day absence may be granted for a funeral or significant close family event; or for an educational event e.g. participation in a major sporting or musical event or performance. Absence due to a family crisis or compassionate reasons may also be considered exceptional reasons. Please note, requests for 'days out' or weekends away, regardless of their educational value, will not be authorised. Issues such as timing of the absence, student's attendance record, student's educational needs and ability to catch up may also be taken into account.

The Education Welfare Officer on behalf of the Head Teacher will consider these requests on an individual basis taking into account the student's attendance record and the circumstances surrounding the request; please do not be offended by a refusal as the school must adhere to the changes to the regulations concerning attendance.

190 School days – 190 days for Education
175 Non-school days – 175 days for holidays, shopping and appointments

October half term -1 week
Christmas Holiday - 2 weeks
February half term - 1 week
Easter Holiday, April - 2 weeks
May half term - 1 week
Summer holiday - 6 weeks

REMEMBER!

If your child has a holiday of 2 weeks during term time
and a 1 week period of sickness in one school
year they will miss out on **75 hours** of their education.....
can they still keep up with other children?

If this pattern is repeated throughout their school life,
they will miss 36 weeks of education.

One school year is 38 weeks!

If after reading the information above, you still need to take your child out of school, you should complete a request form— available below or from reception. Please include as much information as you can to enable us to consider your request. The form should be submitted as far in advance of the proposed absence as possible – ideally 3 weeks prior. You will receive a letter in response to your request, giving our decision and explaining the reasons for our decision.