



Term Time Leave of Absence

*'Growing through Whitchurch -
from early learners to
confident leaders.'*

What does the law say?

The government changed the rules on term-time absence in 2024. Under the new rules, you can only allow your child to miss school if:

- He or she is too ill to go in
- You've got advance permission from the school

How do I request permission for an absence?

You must submit a request to the school before you arrange for your child to have time away.

If you wish to take your child out of school during term time, you should speak to your child's teacher and submit a formal request to the Deputy Headteacher via the school office. The Deputy Headteacher will then consider whether to give permission for the absence.

When will absence requests be granted?

Permission for absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

The Deputy Headteacher will consider each absence request individually and decide whether to grant the absence.

The Deputy Headteacher will also decide how many days your child can be away from school if the absence is granted.

What if I take my child on an unauthorised absence?

If you take your child out of school for term time leave (without advance permission) or if he/she irregular attendance, you can be fined:

- First offence - a fixed penalty notice of £160 per parent/carers, per child when paid within 28 days, or £80 per parent/carers per child if paid within 21 days.
- Second offence within 3 years - a fixed penalty notice of £160 per parent/carers per child is issued and paid within 28 days (no option to pay at £80 level).
- Third/further offences within 3 years - a penalty notice will not be issued; instead the case will proceed to the magistrate's court: magistrate's fines can be up to £2500 per parent/carers, per child.

Why is it important?

Missing two weeks of school for a holiday might not seem like very much, but it can have a big effect on your child's education. For example, if your child misses two weeks of school every year, this adds up to more than two terms over the child's whole time in school.

Making sure your child attends school as much as possible means:

- Your child will have the same education and opportunities as everyone else in the class
- You won't need to worry about catching up on work, or that your child might fall behind because of missing an important lesson
- Your child won't miss out on activities at the start and end of term, which are often fun and a chance to develop friendships

Exceptional circumstances

It is at the school's discretion to decide which circumstances are 'exceptional'. Examples of circumstances that are not exceptional may include:

- Cheap holidays or holidays that have already been paid for
- Absence that coincides with important school events such as the start of term or exams

As a general guideline, exceptional absence circumstances usually apply only to immediate family. Requests for leave related to extended family and friends are likely to be refused.

Key things to remember

- You can only allow your child to miss school if he or she is ill, or if you have advance permission from the school
- Absence requests will only be granted in exceptional circumstances
- You can be fined for taking your child out of school without advance permission from the school

You should refer to the school absence policy when considering whether to submit an absence request.

Please don't hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions.

Contact:

Email:

absence@whitchurchps.co.uk

Telephone:

020 8951 5380

You can find out more about the rules around term-time absence [here](#):

School attendance and absence:
Gov.uk
<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/overview>

You can also find out more on the Attendance page of our website:

<https://www.whitchurchprimary.harrow.sch.uk/page/attendance>

