

Planned absence in term time

Requesting absence in term time

Requests for term-time absence should be made **at least two weeks in advance** by completing the 'Absence Request Form' overleaf.

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure their child who is of compulsory school age receives a full time education. Children are therefore expected to attend school on time every day that the school is open to pupils. The law allows schools to consider individual requests for term-time absence. However, the school is required to satisfy itself that there are exceptional circumstances which justify such absence being authorised. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer submitting the request to provide sufficient information and/or evidence to the school to support this.

Requests for planned absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- For the pupil to attend an external exam
- For the pupil to attend an interview
- If pupils from the Traveller Community have to travel due to their parent's work
- Days of religious observance
- Unavoidable medical / dental appointments (parents/carers are asked to book these outside of school hours wherever possible)
- Seeing a parent on leave from the armed forces
- Other exceptional circumstances (such as a family bereavement). As a general guideline, exceptional circumstances will usually only apply to the immediate family. The headteacher will consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and background behind the request.

Examples of planned absence that will not normally be authorised:

- Term time holidays
- Relatives visiting or visiting relatives
- Any type of shopping
- Birthdays
- Resting after a late night
- Protest activity during school hours
- 'Looking after the house'

Important Notice:

If you allow your child to miss school in term time for an avoidable reason without obtaining approval from the school, you may be committing an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996

Therefore, if this request is unauthorised by the school, a penalty notice may be issued by Torbay Council. A penalty notice offers a parent the opportunity of dealing with a potential offence without going to court, by paying a penalty. If parents can't afford to pay, or for any other reason do not take the offer of paying the notice within a set time, then the case will proceed to a Magistrates Court.

Government guidance issued in September 2024 clarifies that:

- **Penalty Notice Fines** may be issued by the local authority where a pupil has 10 sessions (5 days) or more unauthorised absence from school in any rolling ten week period.
- **First Offence:** If a penalty notice is issued, it carries a penalty of **£160 for each parent for each child absent (reduced to £80 each if paid in full within 21 days.)**
- **Second Offence:** If the same child has a further period of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, in any subsequent ten week period within the 3 years following the first offence, a penalty notice will be charged at the higher rate of **£160 per parent, per child** (with no option to reduce to £80 for early payment).
- **Only two penalty notices will be issued within a rolling 3 year period.** If a child has a further period of 10 sessions unauthorised absence, this will result in the parent/carer being subject to court proceedings. This can result in **a fine of up to £2500 per parent, per child** and be recorded on parents' / carers' DBS records.



ABSENCE REQUEST FORM (Exceptional Circumstances Only)



(When requesting absence during term time, please refer to our school Attendance Policy available on our website **and** the information overleaf)

To: The Headteacher - I wish to apply to have an absence authorised for:

Child's name Class / Year

Child's name..... Class / Year.....

Do you have another child who attends a different school that will also be absent? If so please state the child's name and school below:

.....

Date of absence from to (inclusive)

Name of Parent(s) / Carer(s)

Address:

Please fully explain the exceptional circumstances that you would like the school to consider. This section must be completed – please continue on a separate sheet if needed.

Please sign this request to confirm that the information provided above is correct, and that you have read the important notice contained in the information overleaf.

Signature of parent(s) / carer Date

..... Date.....

Office Use Only		
Date Form Received / /	Current attendance %	<input type="checkbox"/> Absence Authorised Code ___
No of days absence requested	Date notification letter sent	<input type="checkbox"/> Absence Unauthorised
..... days	/ /	SignedHeadteacher
		Date / /