

# Holidays during term-time and authorised absence from school

## Can I take my child out of school for a family holiday?

No. Headteachers cannot and will not authorise school (or other educational establishment) absence purely for the reason of a family holiday. If you feel you have an exceptional circumstance you must speak to your headteacher prior to making any arrangements or taking any absence.

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their children receive education in accordance with section 7 of the Education Act 1996 and if on a school roll that they regularly attend school.

There is, however, a discretionary power held by Headteachers to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances.

**Please note:** This is not an entitlement and a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.

Headteachers will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a child's education.

**Please note:** That supporting documents to aid decision making must be submitted at the time of your request for absence.

**Please note also:** We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from their school first. Headteachers cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstances.

If your request is authorised, you are required to ensure your child catches up on any missed school work. This is your responsibility and school are not obliged to provide work for your child to complete.

Any unauthorised absence will be recorded on your child's attendance records. This may result in legal proceedings against you, either through a Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.

## What is absence from school for exceptional circumstances?

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In order for consideration to be given, requests for absence must be for exceptional circumstances only.

The primary and secondary behaviour and attendance partnerships and the council agree to follow the law, in such that the provision for Headteachers to authorise absence purely for the purpose of a **family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance**.

Exceptional circumstances could include:

1. Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
2. Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
3. The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
4. To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
5. Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of 1 to 4 above, the Headteacher agrees to consult with the principal education welfare officer prior to any authorisation being given to the parent. The principal education welfare officer will discuss each case with an independent Headteacher and will make a recommendation to the referring school.