



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

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Notification of Unauthorised Absence or Request for Compassionate Leave from School

Dear Parent,

As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. Holidays should be taken during the school holiday periods.

During the academic year, pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days. In order for our children to fully utilise their years in education, we believe it is vital that every message they receive reinforces the importance of school. Any leave of absence, including holidays, in term time interrupts continuity of teaching and learning, disrupt the educational progress of individual children and create disruption to classes.

Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Please fill in the attached form if you want to ask the Headteacher to authorise an absence during term time. You must ask well in advance.

If you take your child out of school without the authorised approval of the school, you will be liable to receive a **Penalty Notice** for failing to ensure your child's regular school attendance. Each parent will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice for each child who is absent.

Compassionate Leave

In accordance with the DfE "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" (2024) guidance, the Headteacher may only authorise leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. Each request will be considered individually, taking into account the specific circumstances and supporting evidence provided.

The following examples illustrate how such requests may be considered:

Funerals:

Leave may be authorised to attend the funeral of a close family member or significant individual. This may include one day for the funeral service and, where necessary, an additional day for travel each way, particularly if the service takes place at a considerable distance or overseas.

Weddings:

Requests to attend weddings are not automatically deemed exceptional. Leave may be authorised only where the wedding involves an immediate family member (for example, a parent or sibling)



and should normally be limited to one day, or a short period if significant travel is required and clearly evidenced.

Baptisms or Religious Ceremonies:

Leave may be authorised where a pupil is attending or directly involved in a close family baptism or similar significant religious rite. This would normally be one day, or extended by one day for travel if appropriate.

In all cases, parents or carers will be asked to provide evidence (such as an invitation or travel details), and authorisation will only be given for the minimum period necessary. Longer family gatherings or holidays surrounding these events cannot be authorised.

All permissions are subject to the approval of the head Teacher. Proof of the event should be attached to the following request form.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence **of 10 sessions or more (5 days), within a rolling period of 10 school weeks** will result in the following action being taken:

The penalty notice will be charged at the rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

If you have already incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children within a rolling 3 year period, a second penalty notice will be charged at the flat rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. There will be no reduction for payment within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

If you have incurred 2 penalty notices relating to this child/children in the rolling 3 year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then you will NOT receive a third penalty notice. Surrey County Council will have no option but to consider a prosecution, **per parent/carer per child**, in the Magistrates Court under s 444 Education Act 1996.

If the unauthorised absence exceeds 20 days, your child's name may be removed from the school roll and you will have to reapply for a place upon your return.

For clarity, the penalty payment goes to Surrey County Council to facilitate the above.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully and will notify you of the decision within five school days.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Hallett
Head Teacher

Notification of Unauthorised Absence /Request for Compassionate Leave

Name of Child			
Year and Teacher			
I am applying for leave of absence for my child for the following reason/s: (Please staple a copy of any baptism, wedding, funeral or other evidence to this form).			
From (date):		To (date):	
Number of days my child will be absent from school			

Reason why this exceptional absence cannot be taken during the school holidays:		
Has your child already had leave of absence this school year?	Yes	No
If yes, please give dates and details:		

Signed (parent or guardian):			
Date:			

To be completed by the School Office	
Name of Parent requesting absence in term time:	
Child for whom leave is requested:	
Date request received	
Child's attendance rate for last academic year	
Child's attendance level this academic year	
To be completed by the Headteacher	
Having considered your request carefully, my decision is that leave of absence is:	
Authorised	
Unauthorised	
Explanatory Notes	
Signed	Headteacher
	Date