



Bitham Brook

Primary School

BITHAM BROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leave of Absence Request Form

Taking your child out of school during term time may harm your child's academic progress.

Absences may only be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher in EXCEPTIONAL circumstances.

Circumstances which are notified to the school or Local Authority **after** a decision has been made by the Headteacher will not be considered. Therefore please be certain to provide details of the exceptional circumstances relating to your application below and attach any supporting evidence.

Please read the Local Authority information overleaf which explains Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised Leave of Absence during term time.

Name of Child(ren)	
Date of Birth	
Class	
Date of First Day of Absence	
Date of Return	
Number of Days requested	
Known siblings and school(s) attending	

Exceptional Circumstances (reason) for Leave of Absence during term time:

.....

.....

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Signed: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Carer: _____

For school use:

Attendance%:

Total sessions pupil absent this academic year:

Total unauthorised absence this year:

Request authorised: Yes/No

The **Department for Education** states; every day at school counts enormously and so does every consecutive day attended by pupils. Pupils need to be able to absorb new facts and knowledge, acquire new skills and consolidate before building further and progressing. They simply cannot do so if their structured school terms are disrupted by too many preventable absences.

Absence during Term Time

Parents do not have a legal right to take children out of school. Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Requests for Leave of Absence

A request for a leave of absence must only be considered if;

- The parent the child normally lives with applies in advance for the absence; and
- There are exceptional circumstances for the absence

If the parent with whom the child normally lives does not apply for the absence this would be considered as an unauthorised absence and this parent would be liable to the issue of a Penalty Notice. Absence cannot be authorised if anybody else applies for the holiday.

Exceptional Circumstances

Dictionary definition of **exceptional**

Adjective

- unusual; not typical.
- forming an exception or rare instance; unusual; extraordinary.

What is unauthorised absence?

- A parent has made a request to a school for an absence in term time and this has not been agreed by the school.
- A parent has not applied for an absence in advance (the regulations do not allow retrospective approval).

In what circumstances could an absence be authorised?

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'.

Head teachers should examine each case on its merits before making a decision and should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted

A request for leave of absence could be considered exceptional in the following circumstance;

- For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking leave of absence outside term time at any point in the academic year;
- The terminal illness or bereavement of a parent or sibling if the absence is concurrent.

The overriding principle should be that the absence ought not to be authorised if it will have a detrimental effect on the child's education.

Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence

If the absence has not been authorised by the school and an absence occurs, where the child's total unauthorised absences amounts to 10 or more sessions (5 school days), continuous or aggregated within the previous six months within the current academic year (including the most recent unauthorised absence), schools are expected to notify the Education Welfare Service.

Who receives a Penalty Notice?

A Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child named on the notification. In all cases this will be parent with whom the child lives. For absent parents, step-parents or partners it may be helpful to consider the following:

- With whom the child was with at the time of the absence?
- Was the absent parent aware of the absence?
- Has the school sent a letter of refusal to all concerned?
- Does the absent parent have regular contact or live nearby?

All Wiltshire Schools are expected to follow the Wiltshire Code of Conduct and send notification to the Penalty Officer after a period of unauthorised leave of absence.

**For further advice please contact the Penalty Notice Officer:
Tel: 01722 438123 Email: PNLO@wiltshire.gov.uk**