



West Byfleet Infant School We Belong, Inspire, Succeed

Application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances

As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. Holidays should be taken during the school holiday period. During the academic year pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days.

Please be aware that the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Please complete and submit this form if you want the Headteacher to consider your request for your child's leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. We may ask for proof to validate your request.

Unauthorised absence of 5 days or more will result in the following action being taken:

1. If you have not incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children since 19 August 2024, then 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.
2. If you have incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children since 19 August 2024, the rolling 3 year period will be activated from the date of the first penalty notice and the 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.
3. 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.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully, taking into account the effect on the continuity of your child's learning and your child's overall attendance rate. The Headteacher will notify you of the decision within 5 days. In the absence of a decision, parents/carers cannot assume that permission for the absence has been given.

For further information, please refer to our School Attendance Policy.



West Byfleet Infant School We Belong, Inspire, Succeed

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL – FACTORS TO CONSIDER

We recognise that there are some genuine difficulties and tensions for parents when they make a decision to take their child out of school.

The following information is offered to help:

Why keep your child in school?

Some areas to consider:

- Children have a right to the education that is planned and provided by school.
- Taking a child out of school is disruptive to the child concerned both at the time, before and after the event.
- Absence may be disruptive to others in the class.
- Children away from school miss the scheduled work. The learning experiences cannot be packaged and sent home and are part of ongoing work. For this reason children may not be able to maintain progress. Groupings may need to be changed as a result.
- Confidence and self-esteem may be damaged as the child no longer feels part of the class and the learning situation has moved forward without them.
- A high number of absences in a class impact on the general level and pace of learning. Teaching may need to be adjusted for the whole class.
- Taking children out of school conveys a hidden message about values that are placed on education: a holiday /special occasion is more important than the learning taking place in school. This attitude may be adopted by the child.

Why take your child out of school?

We recognise that there are some genuine exceptional reasons for taking a child out of school. These reasons and their differing priorities will vary according to the family concerned and it is therefore up to the parent to take responsibility for this decision. The application form attached will enable you to give the appropriate context.

As a school we seek to provide the very best learning experiences for your children and this principle is behind our views on time out of school. We hope this is helpful and the Headteacher is very happy to discuss individual circumstances with you.

Mrs Stacey Clarke
Headteacher

Mrs. Angela Woods
Chair of Governors