**APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES DURING TERM TIME**

This form should be completed by the parent / carer and returned to the school as far in advance as possible and **at least 6 weeks prior to the first date of the period of leave being requested. Leave applied for with less than 6 weeks' notice will not be authorised. Parents/ carers must obtain permission from the school before making any arrangements for leave in exceptional circumstances, otherwise the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Where parents wish for the headteacher to consider exceptional circumstances, written evidence must be provided.**

The Department for Education requires Local Authorities to implement government amendments to the regulations regarding the taking of Leave of Absence in term-time. The law gives **no entitlement** to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.

## The regulations make it clear that Headteachers would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional.

Therefore, Headteachers will only be able to grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and this will still be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

**No parent/carer can demand leave of absence as of right.** The Education Regulations state that applications must be made in advance by a parent/carer with whom the child lives and can only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances. Each leave application is considered individually by the school taking into account any factors presented by the family.

The following are examples of the criteria for leave of absence, which may be considered as 'exceptional':

- Service personnel returning from active deployment
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the production or confirmation from the organisation/company
- Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis

This is not an exhaustive list and Headteachers must consider the individual circumstances of each case when making a decision on this matter. Leave is only acceptable against exceptional circumstances and should not be granted on the basis of attendance record, academic performance or the 'experience' offered by being out of school. Where a headteacher feels that there may be exceptional circumstances which do not fit the criteria, they may refer to the local authority for advice. The decision of the Headteacher is final.

Please note that the ability to access a reduced cost of a holiday does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

**Where a child is taken out of school for the purpose of leave of absence in term time without the permission of the school, the absence will be coded as unauthorised and as such may result in a Penalty Notice. Penalties are applied by the Local Authority and as such are not at the discretion of the headteacher. If a Penalty Notice is not paid, the matter may be taken to prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Penalty notices can be issued when a child sustains 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week school rolling period.**

Taking a pupil on leave during term time interrupts teaching and learning and can disrupt your child's educational progress. Before completing this application parents / carers are asked to consider the effect on their child's continuity of education.