



St. Francis Xavier's RC Primary School

Absence Request Guidance for Parents

Please also refer to the St Francis Xavier's School Attendance Policy for full details which is available through the school office or on the school's website.

Important Notes:

Herefordshire target for attendance is 97%. SFX attendance expectation is 97%.

All family holidays should be taken during published school holidays.

The school will not grant permission for any family holidays during term time.

DfE Guidance from September 1st 2013, updated March 2018

Education Regulations prohibit the proprietor (headteacher) of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. The expectation of the Local Authority is that term time holidays should not be planned or booked as a matter of course as they are likely to be unauthorised and will lead to the issuing of a penalty notice (fine). The DfE documentation 2018 states:

The Parent of every child of compulsory school age is required to ensure that the child receive a suitable full time education to the child's ability, age, aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Failure of a parent to secure regular attendance of their school registered child of compulsory school age can lead to a penalty notice or prosecution.

DfE March 2018

You should not expect your child's school to agree to an absence for a holiday in term time.

Parents do not have a legal right to take children out of school on holiday.

Taking a holiday during term time means that children miss important school time.

Each application is considered individually, taking into account factors like the child's attendance record.

If you need to take your child out of school during term time:

- Any absence must be requested as far in advance as possible.
- Never ask for time off during exam or test periods unless for exceptional circumstances.
- Do not book tickets until you have sought the school's permission.

Exceptional circumstances

Are defined as:

- Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting
- Exceptional significant family events or circumstances – these will be considered on an individual basis by the Headteacher.

The headteacher will consider every above request individually but the following **will not meet the criteria:**

- Relatives coming to visit
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad
- Family day trips
- Visiting family/friends that have different half term holidays
- Weddings and visits to see family abroad

Authorised officers have the discretion to issue a penalty notice without warning where the parent has chosen to take the child on leave during term time without authorisation, or evidence is subsequently found to suggest a child was away from school with the knowledge of the parent.

Parents that take unauthorised holiday leave or exceed agreed return-by dates will risk:

- Their details passed to the Local Authority's Attendance Officer
- Losing their child's school place and re-registering with the Local Authority for a new school
- Being Issued with A Fixed Penalty Notice (a fine)

Please consider your child's absence carefully and contact the school if you have any queries.