

Moor First School

School Lane
Biddulph Moor
Stoke on Trent. ST8 7HR
Headteacher: Mrs V Atherton
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Guidance Notes for Parents requesting Leave in Term Time

1. Parents who want the school to consider granting leave of absence in school term time should read these notes carefully, **complete the attached form and send it to the Headteacher**. This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered. Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the school's decision regarding their request. Headteachers cannot authorise any leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins.
2. The Department for Education makes it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Headteachers now also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.
3. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time.
4. Staffordshire County Council understands the challenges that some parents face when booking holidays particularly during school holidays. However, we believe that, in order to ensure children receive the best education and prospects that they should be in school during term time.
5. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents need, therefore, to consider very carefully before making any request for leave of absence. In considering a request, the school will take account of: -
 - the **exceptional** circumstances stated that have given rise to the request
 - the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements
 - frequency of similar requests
 - whether the parent made the request in advance
6. Where parents have children in more than one school a separate request must be made to each school. The head teacher of each school will make their own decision based on the factors relating to the child at their school. However, head teachers may choose to liaise with each other as part of their decision-making process.
7. Should the school decide to grant leave of absence, but the child **does not return to school at the time s/he was expected to** (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave of absence period) and no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
8. Should the school decide **not to grant leave of absence** and parents still take their child out of school, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**. The DfE have recently brought in new guidelines surrounding penalty notices and now operate on a two penalty notice limit within a three-year rolling period. The **first penalty notice** for leave in term time will be £160 per parent per child but can be reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days. If a **second penalty notice** is issued within three years of the first penalty notice, then this will be at a fixed rate of £160 per parent per child, with no reduction for early payment. A **third penalty notice cannot** be issued within the three-year period; therefore, the county

council will deal with any further unauthorised leave through prosecution in the Magistrates Court. If the parent is found guilty, the potential fine is up to £1000. Please note the national threshold for issuing a penalty notice has been set at 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence. However, if in an individual case the local authority believes a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. For example - where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events.

9. The Local Authority will continue to monitor all school absences during term time and support head teachers in challenging parents who ignore the law.

* Generally the DfE states that parents include all those with day to day responsibility for a child.

Request for Leave during Term Time

If, after careful consideration and understanding of the guidance notes, you still wish to request leave during term time, please complete the below:

Date: _____

To Mrs Atherton, Headteacher of Moor First School.

I / we request a leave of absence from school during term time for my/our child/ren: _____

For a period from (date) _____ to (date) _____ Total No. of days _____

The **exceptional** circumstances and reason for this request are: -

I have (an)other child/ren in (an)other school(s) as follows

Child/ren full name: _____ School/s attended: _____

Signature of 1st parent/carer: _____ Print name: _____

Signature of 2nd parent/carer: _____ Print name: _____

Please return completed form to the school office. The school will write to you and inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.

For Office Use Only

Current Attendance _____% Number of school sessions taken as leave during term time _____ (this academic year)

Previous penalty notice issued on: _____

Request for leave is _____ for the above student to take leave during term time between the above dates.

Rationale to decline request: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date letter sent home to parents/carers: _____