

Amendments to the education (pupil registration) (England) regulations 2006

The Government have changed their policy regarding school attendance and existing legal regulations, which come into force from September 2013. This means that term time holiday is removed from the regulations. **Head Teachers are no longer allowed to authorise absence from school unless it is due to exceptional circumstances.** The Absence Request form (S2) should be completed by parents/carers when requesting term time absence from school for their child, regardless of whether the absence is for a holiday, or any other reason. Also, all requests for absence should be evidenced based, e.g. medical appointment cards, letters from employers etc. **It is extremely important all schools are consistent, when authorising/refusing absence during term time.** The following is a guide as to what could/could not be exceptional circumstances for approving a child's absence from school:

Exceptional circumstances:

- When a family needs to spend time together because of an immediate family members bereavement, crisis or serious illness
- Funeral of immediate family member
- Religious observance
- Transport was not provided by the LA when it should have been
- Children of service personnel about to go on deployment (permission would be considered as long as the request is accompanied by a letter from the Commanding Officer)
- **One day** of absence could be authorised for a wedding of an immediate family member and the invitation has been provided as evidence
- One off sporting events/performing arts competitions, if the child is participating and is at county standard or above and a letter has been provided from the performing arts/sports regional governing body as evidence
- **One day** of absence could be authorised for an immediate family members graduation ceremony/passing out parade
- Medical appointments (parents/carers should be encouraged to arrange non-urgent medical appointments outside of school hours when possible. If the medical appointment is during the school day, **evidence must be provided.** Schools should not authorise a whole days absence for a medical appointment that occurs in the morning – the child would be expected to return to school in the afternoon, and vice versa.

Absence should not be authorised for reasons such as the following:

- To care for other family members
- Birthdays
- To interpret for other family members
- No school uniform/shoes
- Bullying
- Friendship problems
- Head lice
- Learning difficulties
- Family holiday
- Weddings abroad – regardless of whether it is for immediate family members
- Family Anniversaries
- Death of a pet
- Travel problems
- School refusal

*(The **immediate family** is a defined group of relations, used in rules or laws to determine which members of a person's family are affected by those rules. It normally includes a person's parents, spouses, siblings and children. It can contain others connected by birth, adoption, marriage, civil partnership, or cohabitation, such as grandparents, grandchildren, siblings-in-law, half-siblings, adopted children and step-parents/step-children, and cohabiting partners)*

Absence codes:

- B** – Educated off site (approved education activity)
- C** – Other authorised circumstances (authorised absence)
- D** – Dual registration (pupil attending another educational establishment)
- E** - Excluded (authorised absence)
- F** – Extended family holiday agreed (authorised absence)
- G** – Family holiday not agreed (unauthorised absence)
- H** – Family holiday agreed (authorised absence)
- I** – Illness (Not medical/dental appointments) (authorised absence)
- J** – Interview (approved educational activity)
- M** –Medical appointment (authorised absence)
- N** – No reason provided yet for absence (unauthorised absence)
- O** – Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code)
- P** – Approved sporting activity (approved education activity)
- R** – Religious observance (authorised absence)
- S** – Study leave (authorised absence)
- T** – Traveller absence (authorised absence)
- U** – Late after registers close (unauthorised absence)
- V** – Educational visit or trip (approved educational activity)
- W** – Work experience (approved education activity)

- X** – Non-compulsory school age absence
- Y** – Enforced school closure
- Z** – Student not yet on roll
- #** - School closed to students