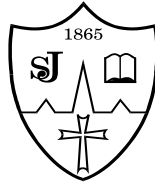


Headteacher
Mrs. L. Harford



St. James' C of E Primary School,
Merestones Road,
Cheltenham.
GL50 2RS
admin@st-james-pri.gloucs.sch.uk
www.stjamescofeprimary.co.uk

REQUEST FOR ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Please do not ask for leave of absence in term time if you can possibly avoid it. **Before completing the form, please read the information overleaf.**

Absence from school can seriously disrupt your child's learning

- they miss the teaching provided on the day
- they are less prepared for lessons upon their return
- there is a consequent risk of underachievement

There is a clear link between attendance and achievement. Leave of absence may therefore be refused if it is felt to be detrimental to your child's education. More information is shown overleaf.

This form must be completed and returned to school no less than 2 weeks prior to the planned absence.

To be completed by the Parent:

Child's nameClass

Inclusive dates of absence from.....to

Reason for absence

.....

.....

Signed.....(Parent/Guardian) Relationship to child

Date

To be completed by the Headteacher:

Child's current attendance %

Leave of absence granted

or

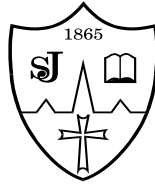
Leave of absence refused. The reason for refusal is

.....

.....

Signed(Headteacher)(Date)

**Headteacher
Mrs. L. Harford**



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School Attendance Policy:

The Law

The law says that:

- **parents** of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that their children receive suitable full time education;
- **Local Authorities** must ensure that parents fulfil their legal obligations regarding their children's education;
- **schools** must allow the LA to inspect their registers.
- **schools** must report to the LA on (most) pupil absences that are not authorised. Gloucestershire's Penalty Notice Code of Practice allows schools to notify the LA of any pupil having more than 5 days (10 sessions) of unauthorised absence in a thirteen week period particularly when this absence is on account of:

- (a) Lateness after registration
- (b) Term time holidays without permission
- (c) Avoidable absence e.g. visiting relatives, birthday treats, tiredness after a late night etc.

Family Holidays in Term Time – Extract from Mrs. Harford's letter to parents 18/9/15

"As you will be aware... the Government has now introduced some significant changes to attendance regulations for pupils at school... Below is a quotation directly from the Department for Education Circular:

'Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.'

I draw your attention particularly to the second sentence of this paragraph. Clearly there are many situations which may constitute exceptional circumstances, but as a general rule, I interpret 'exceptional' in this context as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time.

Exceptional circumstances will not include reasons such as:

- the holiday is cheaper
- attending a wedding
- fits in better with work/ only time parents get time off work (unless an official letter from the employer verifying this is submitted with the request)
- to celebrate a birthday/anniversary.

It is very difficult for me and the governing body to provide parents with a list of what constitutes an exceptional circumstance and whilst it will be important to look at the whole situation in making decisions about any individual request, it has been agreed that our policy will be to normally refuse requests.

The effect of this change means that the government expects it to be extremely unusual for leave of absence, including for holidays in term time, to be permitted by schools.

May I therefore ask that if you do need to take your child out of school during term time, you are very clear in your request as to how the circumstances are exceptional. If this is not clear then under the new legislation, I will not be allowed to grant leave. Without doubt, holidays are best taken out of term time, during one of the 13 weeks holiday that the children have away from school.

In addition to this new legislation there are also new regulations in place in which the imposition of penalty fines for parents and carers taking children out of school in unauthorised circumstances will now be imposed more strictly by the Local Authority. You should also be aware that the rates and the timings of imposition of penalty fines will also become much more stringent. Please find two leaflets attached to this letter from Gloucestershire LA detailing more information." (*Leaflets available from the Office, if required*)