



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

155 Aldershot Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 8YH
Tel 01483 888401 E Mail info@stjosephsguildford.com

Changes to Leave of Absence & Holiday Procedures

Dear Parents

The Government has issued guidelines that schools have to follow with regard to authorising leave of absence from schools. These changes became law on 1st September 2013 and the school has to follow these procedures.

In a nutshell the following procedures have become the law:

- As parents or legal guardians, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. During the academic year, pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days.
- Headteachers may no longer grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** (ie not holiday).
- This became law 1st September 2013 and is a government directive which the school is legally bound to follow.
- The school will consider requests for leave of absence sympathetically, but only in exceptional circumstances can they be approved. Requests in relation to certain personal circumstances including bereavement, medical reasons etc., will be considered as exceptional circumstances.
- The regulations state that parents who take their child out of school for five days or more during term time, without the authority of the Headteacher, will each be liable to receive a Penalty Notice. Penalty Notices will be issued by the Local Authority.
- **Each parent** will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice for **each child** who is absent.
- The Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days (per parent per child) and £120 if paid after 21 days, but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in you being served with a summons to appear at the Magistrates Court.
- A Penalty Notice may also be considered for issue where it is judged that a parent is failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance. This will be considered if the attendance is below 85% and there are 10 or more unauthorised sessions in the previous 6 school weeks, which may include a pupil arriving late after close of registration.
- If you believe at any stage that your child's absence from school may leave you liable to receive a Penalty Notice, it is extremely important that you take action without delay to secure their regular attendance. If you have any questions or require further support to achieve an improvement, please contact the school or the education welfare officer (for our school the contact number is 01483 517179).
- In certain circumstances a warning may be issued from the Local Authority before a Penalty Notice is issued, however warnings will not be given where it can be shown that parents have been notified that such absences will not be authorised.



The school is subject to regular inspections by the Education Welfare Officer and we currently have to produce evidence relating to approved absence from school and this will continue. It is vitally important, therefore, that any absences from school in relation to sickness, visits to the doctor etc., are advised to the school office on the day of absence, or in advance if it relates to a medical appointment, to ensure that the correct reason for absence is recorded.

We hope that you understand that this is not a choice the school has made, but is a government directive and is the law.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Kemp-Powell
Headteacher



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

155 Aldershot Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 8YH
Tel 01483 888401 E Mail info@stjosephsguildford.com

Application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances

Please read the following guidance carefully.

As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. During the academic year, pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days.

Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which becomes law on 1st September 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Please complete and submit this form if you want the Headteacher to consider your request for your child's leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. We may ask for proof to back up your request.

Unauthorised absence of 5 days or more may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice

Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority in accordance with Surrey County Council's Code of Conduct . The Penalty Notice is £60, per child per parent/carer, if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in you being served a summons to appear at the Magistrates Court.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully and will notify you of the decision.

For further information, please refer to our School Attendance Policy.

Name of child:	Class:
I am applying for leave of absence for my child for	
from:	to:
Number of school days:	
The exceptional circumstances for which leave is requested:	



Has your child already had leave of absence in this school year? YES / NO	
If YES, please give dates and details:	
I also have children at...	
Signed: (Parent/Carer)	Date:

To be completed by the Headteacher	
Child's attendance level over the last 12 months:	
Our overall school target for attendance this year is	%
Having considered your request carefully, my decision is that leave of absence is:	
Approved	The absence will be recorded as authorised.
Not approved	The absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
Explanatory notes:	
Signed:	(Headteacher)
	Date: