



Policy for **Term Time Leave**

LEA Statement

Updated : October 2018

Introduction

The intention of this initiative is to provide a coherent, consistent approach across Sheffield schools in managing term time leave and to maximise children's opportunities to achieve.

The Policy Statement sets out clear expectations in relation to:

- Procedures for requesting and granting term time leave
- Procedures for sharing with families (and pupils) the details of the policy statement
- Register coding for authorised and unauthorised leave
- Procedures for a child not returning to school after term time leave

In order for this initiative to succeed it is essential that this policy is formally adopted and implemented by schools governing bodies and shared with pupils and families.

DfES Guidelines

Can pupils go on holiday in term time?

Under current regulations, Statutory Instrument 1995 No 2089 The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, schools have discretion to grant leave of absence for purposes of family holidays in term time. They can approve up to a maximum of ten days in any one school year. Beyond that they can agree more than ten days if the circumstances are exceptional.

Parents are **not entitled** to remove children from school for holidays, leave of absence must be applied for, and the decision to authorise absence for holidays rests entirely with the Headteacher.

Guidance to Parents/Carers

- Wherever possible they should take holidays during school holidays;
- They should avoid taking a school aged child on holiday at times when they should be taking exams or tests;
- They should not expect their child's school to agree to a family holiday during term time. The school will carefully consider their request and may take the child's attendance record into account;
- Schools will not agree to a child missing more than a total of ten school days for family holidays in any one school year, unless there is a very good reason;
- If a child is off for more than ten days, the school may set work for them to do while they are away. (DfES leaflet "School Attendance Information for Parents").

Guidance to Schools

The guidance to schools is contained in the Social Inclusion: Pupil Support DFES Circular 10/99: and is as follows: -

- Parents should not normally take pupils on holiday in term time;
- Each request for holiday absence should be considered individually, taking account of: the age of the child; the time of year proposed for the trip; its nature and parental wishes; the overall attendance pattern of the pupil; the child's stage of education and progress;
- If a school does not agree absence and the pupil goes on holiday, absence is unauthorised;
- If parents keep a child away for longer than was agreed, any extra time is recorded as unauthorised;
- Schools may delete from roll a pupil who fails to return within ten school days of the agreed return date unless there is a good reason for the continued absence such as illness.

If leave is agreed, only up to ten days in a school year should be authorised (and should not regard ten days as the norm).

Legal Position

The legal position is as follows: - The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 amended 1997:

- 8-(1) Leave of absence may only be granted by a person authorised in that behalf by the proprietor of the school;
- 8-(3) Subject to paragraph (4) on application made by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides, a pupil may be granted leave of absence from the school to enable them to go on holiday;
- 8-(4) Except in exceptional circumstances, a pupil shall not in pursuance of paragraph (3) be granted more than ten school days leave of absence in any school year.

Sheffield LEA Term Time Leave Policy

Up to ten days leave may be authorised if the following criteria are fulfilled:

- The School/LEA holiday form is completed by the parent/carer and submitted at least two weeks in advance of the leave. (Leave request forms should be made readily available and provided in different languages).
- The leave is not taken during national or school testing weeks.
- The leave is not taken during the first two weeks of September due to this being an important time for establishing relationships, routines etc.
- The child's attendance is currently above 90%. (If it is the start of a new academic year, the last year's attendance should be used).
- School should inform the parent in writing advising whether the leave has been authorised or unauthorised. It should be made clear the reasons why a decision has been taken and the criteria used should be re-iterated.
- The actual date that the child will return to school should always be provided by the parent/carer.

Register Codes

- If the designated authority in school authorises the term time leave, the register code 'H' should be used. The statistical meaning for this should be authorised absence;
- If the designated authority in school declines the request for term time leave, and the child is absent due to the leave being still taken, the register code 'G' should be used. The statistical meaning for this should be unauthorised absence. In this case, normal procedures for non attendance apply and the school should make a referral to the Attendance and Inclusion Service following agreed procedures;

If the child does not return to school on the date agreed after authorised leave

- If another reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer the pupil should be registered appropriately. In all other cases register the absence as unauthorised;
- Normal procedures for non attendance apply and the school should make a referral to the Attendance and Inclusion Service following agreed procedures;
- The Attendance and Inclusion Service will then inform the school of the outcome of the visit and make recommendations for action;

Procedure for sharing this policy with families

- For this Policy statement to be effective it is essential that schools share with parents and pupils the expectations and procedures outlined in this document.

- Schools may decide to hold meetings for parents specifically in relation to the guidelines and may use the leaflet at such meetings.
- New intake evenings and parents' evenings can also be used to share the information.

Reference can also be made to this policy in school prospectuses. Specific reference could also be made in home/school agreements and planners.