



## Leave of Absence Guidance for Parents

**Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

Requests for leave of absence should not normally be granted for the purposes of a holiday. The law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Head Teachers have the discretion to authorise leave of absence in **exceptional** circumstances and it is only for the Head Teacher to determine what is truly exceptional. School days are precious; children only attend school 190 out of 365 days. There are 175 days a year which parents can use for any activities other than school.

### Applications for Leave of Absence During Term Time

All requests for leave of absence should be made by parents at least two weeks in advance to the Headteacher by completing the school application form. A parent/adult with whom the child resides with must make the application even though the pupil may not be taking the proposed leave with them. The form will be completed and you will receive a written response confirming if the request will be authorised or not. **If you are travelling abroad you will need to supply us with confirmation of your booking, including date booked, outbound and return flight tickets before you leave. Please bring your flight details into the school reception** for us to copy or email them to the school office email address [office@williamaustininfants.co.uk](mailto:office@williamaustininfants.co.uk).

### Unauthorised Absence

If you take your child out of school without the school's prior authorisation, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (which is illegal) and noted in your child's school records. Leave of absence can only be authorised by the Headteacher.

**Where a parent/carer has taken their child on leave of absence during term time for 5 consecutive school days or more, without the Headteacher's authorisation, you could receive a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority. In these circumstances a warning will not be given.** Penalty Notices are per parent, per child as appropriate, so if there are 2 parents both will need to pay the fine for each child. Penalty notices issued for a First Offence will need to be paid within 21 days at £80 or £160 within 28 days, subsequently a Second Offence within a 3-year period will result in a Penalty Fine issued at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days, part payments are not accepted. There is no appeal process for a penalty notice. Unpaid Penalty Notices, result in prosecution for the absence in the magistrate's court. Please note all adults with care of the child are usually liable.

Penalty Notices will only be used two times per pupil within a 3-year period. If a third leave of absence is taken within three years of the first leave of absence this may result in prosecution at the Magistrate's Court.

### Failure to return to school on the date expected

If there is a reason which delays the pupil in returning to school the parent/guardian must inform the school immediately. The school will require evidence of this issue and will then decide whether the absence will be authorised. For any travel arrangements outside of the UK we require proof of return flights, prior to the leave being taken - this may protect you from receiving unauthorised absence for your child and a fine if they are unable to return on the date expected.

Each case will be assessed individually and medical evidence from abroad is not routinely accepted. Please note prolonged unauthorised absence from school can also result in your child's name being removed from the school roll and on return you would need to re-apply for another school place.