

Alder Grove Church of England Primary School

LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM 2026-27

Important Information for Parents:

Exceptional Circumstances: Schools cannot authorise any leave during term unless it is for '**exceptional circumstances**.' The decision to authorise such an absence remains entirely with the **Headteacher** and each request will be considered individually, taking into account the specific circumstances, the pupil's attendance record, the impact on their education, and any supporting information provided. If leave is authorised due to exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher will determine the number of days approved.

Holidays / Leave during term time or irregular attendance: Taking an unauthorised holiday in school time is classed as a criminal offence. Taking unauthorised holidays of 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) or more within a rolling ten-week period will result in the school requesting a **Fixed Penalty Notice Fine** from the Local Authority. This applies to consecutive absence, in shorter blocks or sporadic sessions. A session is classed as a morning or an afternoon.) The ten-week period is not restricted to a single academic term and may span across terms. School holiday periods are not included when calculating school weeks. Where this threshold is met for other unauthorised leave of absence or irregular attendance, the school and local authority will consider the individual circumstances of the case and determine whether a Penalty Notice or another intervention is appropriate in line with the local authority's Code of Conduct and the Department for Education's statutory guidance.

PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS CHANGING

1

FIRST OFFENCE

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular Attendance the amount will be:
£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days
Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

2

SECOND OFFENCE (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. No reduced rate will be offered.

The following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024.

3

THIRD OFFENCE AND ANY FURTHER OFFENCES (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a Parents future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education.

10 SESSIONS (5 DAYS) OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE IN A 10-WEEK PERIOD

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

Please follow the link for the Publication that will start from 19th August 2024.
www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance

Fixed Penalty Notice Fines: If the threshold is met for a fine (see above), penalty notices are issued to **each parent per child**. The **first penalty notice for unauthorised absence is £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, and £160 if paid within 28 days**. If there is a **second offence within three years of the first penalty notice being issued**, the fine is **£160 per parent, per child**. A **third offence within three years may lead to prosecution in a magistrate's court**. Failure to pay the fines may also result in the matter being taken to court. Fine payments do not come to the school; they go directly to the Local Authority. More details can be found on the attached poster and at www.wokingham.gov.uk/penaltynotices.

Lengthy Trips Overseas: If parents remove pupils from school for long visits overseas, the school may seek to remove the student concerned from the school roll, in consultation with the Education Welfare Officer.

Important: Teachers will not offer catch-up learning for pupils taking unauthorised holidays or leave of absence during the school term.

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Pupil's name.....Year / Class

How to complete the form:

1. Please write a full explanation of why you are requesting absence during term time and return the form to the school office.
2. Please include supporting evidence of any exceptional circumstances that mean your child needs to be absent from school.
3. If the absence is for religious observance, please include the name and contact details of your place of worship.
4. Return the form within 15 days of the first day of absence, otherwise requests may be declined.
5. Retrospective requests for leave of absence will not be granted and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. School will endeavour to respond to your request within 5 working days.
6. Should you wish to book a meeting to discuss the circumstances around your leave of absence request with Mr. Theobald (Headteacher) or Miss Scales (Senior Attendance Lead), please contact the school office as soon as possible.

Reason for absence in term time (This must be completed)

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Absence Period from (1st day of absence) to (return date to school).....

Number of school days to be missed

Sibling details Name(s)/School(s)

Signature of Parent(s)/Guardian..... Date.....

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian (please print)

School use only

Attendance% Unauthorised absence% Authorised absence.....% Previous Year's Attendance.....%

Has holiday / unauthorised leave of absence already been taken this school year? Yes / No

School Response

Your request for leave of absence has been considered.

- ☐ The absence is unauthorised.
- ☐ We are able to authorise _____ days of absence.

Signed: Date:
Miss R Scales, Deputy Headteacher & Senior Attendance Champion