



**St BEDE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL  
DURING TERM TIME**

**This form is to be completed and forwarded to the Head Teacher of the school via the school office.**

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child/ren's regular attendance at school. **The Head Teacher can only authorise leave of absence for children in very exceptional circumstances (see 'General Principles' section overleaf).** The Head will consider the child's attendance record when making his decision. In situations where a child's attendance is below 95%, leave is unlikely to be granted. If leave of absence is granted, normally, only 3 days leave will be granted per academic year.

Please be aware that if you take your child out of school for unauthorised leave during term time, you may be contacted by the Education Welfare Officer and ultimately issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

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I request that leave of absence be granted to:

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

From (first day of absence) \_\_\_\_\_ to (last day of absence) \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of days out of school \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

How many days leave of absence has the child already had from school this year? \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons why this leave of absence request is considered exceptional:

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.....

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Reply slip to be given to parent                      Pupil Name \_\_\_\_\_

The leave of absence request has been granted/refused.

Reason:

.....  
.....  
.....

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*NB: if leave has been refused and the child is still absent on these days, the absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'. Please note your child's current attendance registration sheet, attached.*

## **General Principles:**

1. Term times are for education. This is the priority. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. Head teachers will rightly prioritise attendance. The default school policy should be that absences will not be granted during term-time and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional circumstances' are that they are 'rare, significant, unavoidable and short'.
2. The decision to authorise a pupil's absence is wholly at the head teacher's discretion based on their assessment and merits of each request.
3. If an event can be reasonably scheduled outside of term-time then it would not be normal to authorise absence for such an event – holidays are therefore not considered 'exceptional circumstances'.
4. Absences to visit seriously-ill relatives or for a bereavement of a close family member are usually considered to amount to 'exceptional circumstances', but for a brief period only (e.g. a hospital visit or funeral service), not for extended leave.
5. Absences for important religious observances are often taken into account but only for the ceremony and travelling time, again, not for extended leave. This is intended for one-off situations rather than regular or recurring events.
6. Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
7. Families may need time together to recover from a trauma or a crisis.
8. It is acceptable to take a pupil's record of attendance into account when making absence-related decisions.
9. It is important to note that head teachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether a particular absence is authorised.