



SOMERIES JUNIOR SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY **(LEAVE OF ABSENCE)**

Someries Junior School will be adopting the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officers Attendance Policy as follows:

Rationale

Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 have been amended and come into force from 1 September 2013. The amendments remove references to 'holiday' from school and extended leave of absence as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. **Head Teachers 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.

A maximum of one day per religious observance may be granted (maximum: twice per year).

Leave of absence will not be authorised in the following circumstances

- Pupil's attendance is less than 97% in the previous 12 months
- During SATs, GCSE or other public examination years
- In a transition year
- At the beginning of any academic year
- Retrospectively
- If there are any other academic concerns such as poor punctuality, pupils ability to catch up on the work missed etc
- If leave of absence has already been taken in the same school year

We will also take into account the following:

- The pupil's general absence/attendance record, e.g. Unauthorised absence
- Proximity of SATs and public examinations
- Amount of time requested
- Age of the pupil
- Length of the proposed leave
- Pupil's ability to catch up on the work
- Pupil's educational needs
- General welfare of the pupil
- Circumstances of the request
- Purpose of the leave
- Frequency of the activity; and
- When the request was made

Applications for Leave of absence

Requests must be made in advance or the absence cannot legally be authorised. All requests must be made at least two weeks in advance to the Head Teacher 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 must be fully completed and you will receive a written response confirming if the request will be authorised or not.

If leave is granted and you are travelling abroad you will need to supply us with confirmation of your return flight tickets, such as bringing a copy of the flight tickets into the school reception for us to copy.

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 Head Teacher.

Where a parent/carer has taken their child on leave of absence during term time for 5 consecutive school days or more, without the Head Teacher's authorisation, Luton Local Authority will issue a Penalty Notice. 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. From 1 September 2013 penalty notices will need to be paid within 21 days at £60 or £120 within 28 days. Unpaid Penalty Notices, will result in prosecution for the absence in the magistrate's court.

The school make the decision as to whether the request of leave should be granted or not and the Local Authority make the decision to impose a penalty for this.

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 prevent you from receiving unauthorised absence for your child and being fined if they are unable to return on the date expected. Each case will be assessed individually and medical evidence from abroad will not be accepted routinely as evidence that a pupil was unable to attend school.

Absences before/after a school holiday

If your child is absent from school due to illness directly before or after a school holiday, medical evidence will be required to authenticate the absence. If medical evidence is not provided the absences will be unauthorised and referred to our Education Welfare Officer.

Roll Removal

A Pupil can be removed from roll in either of these circumstances:

- If you take your child on leave of absence which has been authorised by the school but your child fails to return on the agreed date, any extra time absent from school will be counted as unauthorised. If your child fails to return within ten days of the expected date of return then the school may remove your child from the school roll and notify the Local Authority accordingly.
- Or, if your child has 20 days continuous unauthorised absence

To be reviewed and ratified at the FGB Resources & Finance Committee – 26.02.18

Review Date: Spring 2020

Appendix A

Somerles Junior School
Request for leave of absence from school during term time

This should be completed before booking any travel arrangements

To be completed by the Parent/Guardian

Pupil's Name _____ Class _____

Address _____

Ethnicity _____ Date of birth _____

Date of absence request From _____ To _____

Reason for application _____

First name _____

First name _____

Surname _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Address _____

Contact Number _____

Contact Number _____

Date of application _____

Date of application _____

I have read the schools leave of absence policy document

Parent/Guardian signature _____ Date _____

Name _____

For schools use only

Current attendance (must be at least 97%) _____ No of term days requested _____

If the child has had previous term time leave, please state dates and number of days taken

Leave agreed/Not agreed Date of letter confirming the decision posted to parent _____

Reasons _____

If leave is to be authorised, the following must be completed

Travelling abroad? Yes/No Country _____ Return date: _____

Proof of return date (*tickets/e mail etc*) _____

SIGNED: **Head Teacher** **DATE:**