



**Malbank School & Sixth Form College**

**Holiday In term Time Policy (Reviewed Jan 2025)**

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The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations originally set out in 2006 state that headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are *exceptional circumstances*. This means that headteachers should not grant leave of absence for holidays or other leisure activities. Government guidance makes it clear that parents must get permission from the headteacher if they want to take their child out of school during term time and in doing so must present a case as to why this should be considered.

For clarity, parents can only do this if:

- They make an application directly to the head teacher before the holiday.
- There are **exceptional circumstances**

Following the impact of lost learning time during the Pandemic, the DfE made additional changes via a post-Covid update to their advice and guidance in May 2022:

“Head teachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If a head teacher grants a leave request, it will be for the head teacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. **Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.**”

Guidance also clarifies that it is for each school to set its own policy on what it considers to be exceptional circumstances. Guidance makes it very clear that it is up to the head teacher how many days a child can be away from school *if* leave is granted and that there is no official definition of what “exceptional” means. However, it is suggested that exceptional circumstances are likely to be “**one-off events which are unavoidable**”.

Some examples of circumstances that *might* be considered exceptional at **Malbank** include:

- Terminal illness or bereavement in the family requiring a trip to attend a funeral or visit the terminally ill relative.
- A family wedding or religious event that cannot be rearranged to take place outside of term time
- The family becoming homeless unexpectedly
- A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, such as a sporting event which sees the student representing their country or performing at an exceptional level.
- The student has a religious obligation that requires them to be absent from school.
- A family crisis, such as a domestic violence situation
- Attendance at Cadet training experiences where students are backed by relevant army/navy etc authorities writing to the school in support

However, even when the above categories are presented for consideration, this must still be balanced against current levels of student attendance and as such every decision will be treated on an individual basis, taking all elements noted above into account when the headteacher makes the decision as to whether permission will be granted.

Please note that all applications from parents/carers regarding requests to take holiday leave in term time **must be submitted directly to the Headteacher**. This can either be via letter or email.

The Headteacher will then respond personally to your request confirming their decision within 5 working days.