

PRIOR TO APPLYING FOR TERM TIME ABSENCE PLEASE READ THIS IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The full Meridian Trust Attendance Policy followed by each academy can be accessed via each academy website.

1. Parents/Carers have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education through regular attendance at school or otherwise (e.g. elective home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996).
2. If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at the school/academy they are registered at, the parent/carer will be guilty of an offence (Section 444(1) Education Act 1996).
3. School attendance is vital for educational progress and all Meridian Trust Academies/Schools strongly discourage term time absence.
4. There is no entitlement to have leave of absence during term time and Principal/Headteachers are unable to authorise absence unless it is **evidenced** that the request is an **exceptional circumstance** in line with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 & subsequent amendments.
5. The expectation is that all students aspire to achieve 100% attendance at school, with a minimum of 96% unless there are exceptional authorised reasons for absence.
6. **A Parent/carer is defined** under Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 as: the natural parent of a child, whether they are married or not; anyone who although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child; any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child (e.g. partner, step-parent, sibling over the age of 18 or grandparent).
7. Department of Education (DfE) Guidance states good attendance should be promoted, and absence should be challenged and addressed early to ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
8. **Penalty Notices** are used as a deterrent to absence during term time. Each Academy's Local Authority (LA) has the statutory duty to issue Penalty Notices and/or process legal action upon submission of appropriate evidence by said academy. A Penalty Notice is a fine of **up to £120 per parent, per child**, and failure to pay will result in prosecution before Magistrates Court where a prosecution under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 will be heard; if convicted you may be fined up to £1,000.
9. All requests will be considered on an individual basis and **must be received in advance** (we ask for at least 3 weeks in advance of the absence occurring where possible to allow for administering the request). Details of other school age siblings and where they attend school should be provided as we are required to liaise with sibling schools.
10. **If a request is refused the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.** All unauthorised absence will carry a warning that legal action may be taken; whether this action takes place will depend on the amount of sessions/days absence requested. Each LA has a minimum threshold where if the absence is for less than that minimum (normally 6 sessions (3 days)) a Penalty Notice would not be requested however, should there be subsequent unauthorised absence within the following 30 school days of the requested absence, all absence will form part of a wider absence period and action could be taken. If the absence is for more than the LA minimum, a Penalty Notice will normally be automatically requested upon your child's return to school.
11. If the period of absence requested is **authorised**, the requested dates must be adhered to. Failure to travel and return on the requested dates, causing additional absences to be recorded as unauthorised, may lead to a legal sanction being imposed if evidence cannot be provided, at your own cost, to verify the exceptional cause of the additional absences.
12. If absence is **not requested in advance** and it is suspected that absence from school is due to unauthorised reasons e.g. holiday or unexplained absence, you will be required to provide evidence to prove the absence was for legitimate authorised and exceptional reasons; failure to do so may result a Penalty Notice being issued.
13. Your child may also be registered as 'Child Missing Education' with the LA and their place at the academy may be at risk if they have unauthorised absence for 20 days or more and we cannot establish your child is definitely returning.

A HOLIDAY MAY BE CHEAP DURING TERM TIME BUT A CHILD'S EDUCATION IS PRICELESS

TERM TIME ABSENCE REQUEST FORM FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Term time absence request for: **Student Name**
 House & Form Year Group:..... 1st Line of Address & Post Code:
 1st Date of Absence: Last Date of Absence:

Please note: If the Principal's decision is that the absence is determined as **unauthorised** and it is for **6 sessions** (3 days) **or more** (depending on local LA protocol) a Penalty Notice will **normally be automatically** issued as soon as the child returns to school.

Purpose of Absence – Please ensure you detail below the specific reasons for the absence and **what is exceptional** about the circumstance. Please also attach evidence that verifies why the absence is exceptional, especially why the absence cannot be taken during a school holiday period. You may also attach an additional letter if you wish.

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Name of other children in the family	Age/Yr Grp	Education Provision/School	Please note you are required to complete a request for each child and to each school/academy if different. NB. Schools are required to liaise with each other and share information.

IMPORTANT WARNING – PLEASE READ PRIOR TO SIGNING

- You may be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal to discuss this request further.
- Once a decision has been made you will be notified in writing.
- If the absence is authorised, specified dates must be adhered to. Failure to travel and return on the requested dates, causing additional absences to be recorded as unauthorised, may lead to a legal sanction if evidence cannot be provided, at your own cost, to verify the cause for additional absences.
- If the absence is refused, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and a Penalty Notice Warning will be subsequently issued to both parents/carers.

By signing below, you are confirming **all** parents/carers (see point 6 overleaf) have read and understood the information and warnings within this form. **All parents/carers & adults living with the child must print & sign.**

Print Name..... Sign:.....DoB: Relationship to Student: Dated.....

Print Name..... Sign:.....DoB: Relationship to Student: Dated.....

Print Name..... Sign:.....DoB: Relationship to Student: Dated.....

ACADEMY USE: Current Attendance: ☐ % Last year's attendance (if relevant or request is Autumn Term) ☐ %
 Number of School Days Requested: ☐ Request received in advance of travel (3 weeks' where possible) **Yes / No**
 Are there Exceptional Circumstances? **Yes / No** Please detail rationale for decision:

DECISION: Date: Authorised (Letter TTA A) ☐ Unauthorised (Letter TTA U) ☐

Signed by Principal or Designated Person: Date:

Leave Taken? **Yes / No** Letter to Parent(s)/Carer(s) issued by Post on: Also by Email? **Yes / No**
 Reason for Absence noted on Student Attendance Record ☐

Return Date Diarised for Review (to consider if action will be PN Request, Meeting or Continued Monitoring) ☐