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## Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Information for Parents

You are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly. There is, however, a discretionary power held by Headteachers to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. Please note this is **not an entitlement**. The Headteacher will only authorise absence in line with the East Riding Behaviour & Attendance Partnership 'Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances' Policy. Headteachers will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a child's education. **Please note that supporting documents to aid decision making must be submitted at the time of your request for absence.**

There is no longer a provision in law for Headteachers to authorise an absence for the purpose of a term time holiday. **A term time holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.** Leave of absence will not be authorised if your child's attendance percentage is below 95%. Leave of absence will not be granted during the month of September for any child, the month of May for Year 6 and Year 2, and the month of June for Year 1 or Year 4.

If your request is authorised, you are required to ensure your child catches up on any missed school work. This is your responsibility and school are not obliged to provide work for your child to complete. Any unauthorised absence will be recorded on your child's attendance records. This may result in legal proceedings against you, either through a Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.

**Penalty Notice** - Under the Anti Social Behaviour Act (2003) the local authority and schools have statutory powers to tackle poor school attendance and/or unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the Headteacher has not given permission for or where an explanation has not been provided by the parent. If your child accrues 10 sessions of unauthorised absence you may be liable for a penalty notice (one days absence equals two sessions and a five day absence is equal to 10 sessions etc.).

Fines are issued for unauthorised absence of 5 or more days and each school day is divided into 2 registration periods. **For example if your child is absent for one day this equals 2 sessions and a five day absence is equal to 10 sessions.**

If your request is declined and you still take your child out of school each parent within your household may be issued with a £60 penalty notice for each child you have taken out of school. If a penalty notice remains unpaid after 21 days it will increase to £120. If after 28 days it remains unpaid you may be summonsed to appear before Magistrates to explain why your child has unauthorised school absences and you may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.

Support and guidance on attendance is always available and if you have any questions about this, or if you need help to achieve an improvement, please contact your child's school to discuss this.

**We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from their school first. Headteachers cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstance.**

Please visit [Holidays during term-time and authorised absence from school \(eastriding.gov.uk\)](http://eastriding.gov.uk) for further information.