

Attendance - Term Time Holidays

All children are entitled to a full-time education that meets their needs. Children must get an education between the school term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June in the school year they turn 16.

Data shows that children in care typically underperform academically; each day of non-attendance for a child in care is therefore significant.

There is no entitlement and therefore it is not acceptable for a carer to take a child out of school for a holiday during term time; social workers should not authorise this. This will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

“You have to get permission from the head teacher if you want to take your child out of school during term time. You can only do this if:

- *you make an application to the head teacher in advance (as a parent the child normally lives with)*
- *there are exceptional circumstances*

It’s up to the head teacher how many days your child can be away from school if leave is granted.” (DFE)

[School attendance and absence: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-and-absence/overview)

For children in care, requests should be made to the Head Teacher of the school the child attends AND the Virtual School Head Teacher. Permission will only be granted if the circumstances are exceptional.

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child’s rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.

Both Head Teachers must agree for the absence to be authorised.