



Melbourn Village College- Exceptional Leave Request

Please complete Section A and B below



Section A

I request that _____ Form _____
(name of student and form)

be granted absence from Melbourn Village College

from _____ to _____ number of days _____
(inclusive dates)

Please read the guidance overleaf first and then detail the reasons for requesting exceptional leave. Submit an attached note if insufficient room here.

I confirm that I have read the guidance overleaf and understand the possible sanctions if I take my child out of school without permission.

Signature of Parent/Carer _____ Date _____

Section C Authorised / NOT Authorised _____ % Attendance. History checked _____

SLT signature _____ Date _____

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Section B (To be returned to parent) Melbourn Village College - Exceptional Leave Request

Name of student _____ Form _____

Absence from (dates) _____ to _____

Section C Student Attendance ____ %. Number of days requested _____

Authorised / NOT Authorised Additional comments: _____

SLT signature _____ Date _____

You have confirmed that you have read the guidance on exceptional leave requests and understand the possible sanctions if you take your child out of school without permission.

Guidance for requesting Exceptional Leave

As a parent or carer you are strongly urged to avoid taking your child out of college during term time. In the majority of situations such absences will be recorded as unauthorised.

The latest amendments to the Education (Pupil Register) Regulations mean that term time leave can only be authorised in “exceptional circumstances”. Very few situations can be regarded as exceptional. The death / funeral of a close relative will be considered as exceptional. Taking a holiday at a cheaper time of the season, or to fit in with other relative’s plans or travelling to an event early, or returning late, to avoid traffic for your convenience will NOT be considered as exceptional.

If leave is taken without permission it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. This will appear both in the college register and on your child’s report. Any decision about taking legal action as a result of unauthorised leave will be made in consultation with the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Even when permission is granted the absence will reflect in your child’s attendance statistics. Regardless of the circumstances, the statistics will only record actual attendance, although we will have a record of the reasons for authorised absences.

DFE’s guidance states that:

Can a school fine a parent for taking their child on holiday during term time?

Yes. Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their child aged 5-16, if registered at a school, attends that school regularly. Taking an unauthorised term time holiday is grounds for issuing a penalty notice according to the local authority’s code, and if the leave of absence for holiday was not authorised by the school, either the school or the local authority may issue a penalty notice.

Can schools decide whether parents should be prosecuted or not?

No. Only local authorities can make decisions on whether parents should be prosecuted for school attendance offences. All schools (including academies) have a duty to refer regular absence (authorised and unauthorised) to the relevant local authority. This may include any evidence to show how they supported the pupil and parent to improve attendance. It is for each local authority to judge each referral on its own merits and make a decision on the next probable cause of action.

DFE’s guidance states that: (Repeated for you to retain on your section of the reply slip)

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APPENDIX D: UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school, either as authorised or unauthorised absence.

1 Authorised absences

Authorised absences are approved by a member of SLT.

'Exceptional circumstances' for which the College may grant a leave of absence include:	Circumstances under which absence will not be authorised include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate family bereavement, crisis or serious illness • Funeral of immediate family member • Religious observance • One day's absence for the wedding of an immediate family member, where the invitation has been provided as evidence • One-off sporting events/performing arts competitions, if the Student is participating and is at County standard or above, and a letter has been provided from the performing arts/sports regional governing body as evidence • One day's absence for an immediate family member's graduation ceremony/passing out parade • Medical appointments (please arrange non-urgent medical appointments outside of school hours when possible.) If the medical appointment is during the school day, evidence must be provided. The College will not usually authorise a whole day's absence for a morning medical appointment – the child would be expected to return to school in the afternoon, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family holidays • Weddings abroad – regardless of whether it is for immediate family members • Family anniversaries • Caring for other family members • Birthdays • Interpreting for other family members • Lack of school uniform/shoes • Bullying • Friendship problems • Head lice • Learning difficulties • Death of a pet • Travel problems (Unless the fault of the LA) • School refusal, except where corroborated by appropriate health professional

2. Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which permission has not been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. If a student takes unauthorised term time leave for 6 consecutive sessions or 3 days or more over a 4-week period, then a penalty notice may be issued regardless of regular attendance figures.

3. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the year for whatever reason. This means that if a student's attendance drops to below 90% they are considered to be persistently absent. This figure is set by the Government and was updated in September 2015. A penalty notice may be issued in relation to any student whose attendance is less than 90% in any given period. Such a Fine is intended to offer a rapid intervention, which may be used to address non-school attendance before it becomes entrenched. Absence at this level causes considerable damage to a child's educational prospects. The school monitors all absence thoroughly. PA pupils are tracked through the pastoral system, combined with academic monitoring. All PA cases are made known to the Educational Welfare Officer and Local Authority Attendance Officer.

Pupils at risk may also be referred to the Attendance and Family Support Worker, who works with families to provide support and strategies to encourage attendance.