



# Thames View Infants

## Application for Special Leave of Absence

### Term-Time Leave and Attendance Expectations

Parents **do not have an automatic legal right** to take their child out of School during term time. Headteachers may only authorise absence in **exceptional circumstances**. Holidays will not be authorised. Taking a child out of School disrupts learning, routines, and friendships. Missed learning is difficult to recover and can affect progress, wellbeing, and safeguarding.

Poor or irregular attendance:

- disrupts academic progress
- affects emotional wellbeing and confidence
- makes it harder for children to form friendships
- may raise safeguarding concerns

### Fixed Penalty Notices (Fines)

Thames View Infants follows the **national attendance framework** and Local Authority guidance. **Unauthorised leave will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice issued per parent, per child.** This may also apply to siblings attending other Schools.

Under the current framework:

- **First penalty notice:** £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid within 28 days
- **Second penalty notice (within three years):** £160 per parent, per child (no discount)
- Only **two penalty notices** may be issued for the same child within a three-year period

Once this limit is reached, or if a fine is not paid, the case may be escalated.

### Court Action

Further unauthorised absence may be referred to the **Magistrates' Court** under **Section 444 of the Education Act**, which can result in:

- a criminal prosecution
- fines of up to £2,500 per parent
- Parenting Orders or other court sanctions
- in extreme cases, custodial sentences

Court proceedings may result in a **criminal record**.

### Religious Observance

The same rules apply to leave for **Umrah, Hajj, or other religious observance**. Families are expected to plan these during School holidays or make arrangements to ensure their child attends School.

### Bereavement and Exceptional Circumstances

We understand that families may experience difficult circumstances. In cases of **bereavement or serious emergency**, please speak to us as soon as possible so we can consider how best to support your child. Each case is considered individually.



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### If You Believe Your Circumstances Are Exceptional

You must:

- inform the School as far in advance as possible
- **not book travel** before permission is given
- provide supporting evidence if requested
- understand that absence **may still not be authorised**

### Fairness and Consistency

These rules apply to **all families**, including staff with children at the School, to ensure fairness for everyone.

#### Please Be Aware

Parents who take unauthorised leave or exceed agreed return dates risk:

- a Fixed Penalty Notice per parent, per child
- referral to the Local Authority Attendance Officer
- further legal action, which may affect a child's School place

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#### (Form For Exceptional Circumstances Only)

I confirm that this request relates to a genuine and exceptional family emergency.

I understand that term-time holidays will not be authorised under any circumstances.

I confirm that no travel, accommodation, or related arrangements have been booked.

I confirm that I have read and understood the attendance guidance and penalty information provided in this document.

**Name of Child:**

**Class:**

*A separate form must be completed for each child affected.*

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### Details of Exceptional Circumstances

*(Requests stating or implying "holiday", "family visit", or "travel convenience" will not be considered.)*

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#### Evidence Attached

Please attach **documentary evidence** to support this request (for example: medical, legal, or official documentation). Requests submitted without evidence are unlikely to be authorised.

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### Other Children in the Family

(Unauthorised leave may result in penalty notices being issued for siblings attending other Schools),

**Name:**

**Year/Class:**

**School:**



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First Day of Absence:   Date Expected to Return to School:   Total Number of School Days Missed:

*Open, flexible, or unconfirmed travel arrangements will not be accepted as evidence of return.*

### Attendance Declaration

My child's attendance to date: \_\_\_\_\_ %

*(This information must be obtained from the school office before submitting this form.)*

Above 97.5% (in line with School expectations)    Below 95%

**Persistent Absentee:**  Below 90%    Below 85%    Below 80%    Below 75%

*Lower attendance significantly reduces the likelihood of authorisation.*

### Decision (School Use Only) (Retain copy; original to Parent)

**Special leave is NOT authorised.**

Any absence taken will be recorded as **unauthorised**. By proceeding, parents accept the risk of:

- a Fixed Penalty Notice per parent, per child
- referral to the Local Authority Attendance Officer
- further legal action, which may affect a child's School place

**Special leave is authorised until: \_\_\_\_\_ ONLY**

Failure to return on the next School day will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised, with the same consequences as listed above.

### Parental Declaration

I confirm that I have read and understood both sides of this form. I understand that **unauthorised absence or failure to return by the agreed date will automatically trigger attendance enforcement procedures**. I accept full responsibility for any penalties or legal action arising from my decision.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_