Only the Headteacher can authorise absence from school. Absences will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

**Part 1: to be completed by the parent/carer and sent to school a full 2 weeks before the first date of absence.** Please email to [attendance@bristolfreeschool.org.uk](mailto:attendance@bristolfreeschool.org.uk)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student name |  | |
| Tutor Group |  | |
| Reason for absence  *(please continue on another sheet if necessary)* |  | |
| First date of absence |  | |
| Last date of absence |  | |
| Number of school days’ absence requested |  | |
| **Name and address of parent /carer:** | | **Signed:** | |
| **Print Name:** | |
| **Date:** | |

Bristol Free School will consider every application individually; policy is NOT to grant leave of absence other than in the most exceptional circumstances as judged by the Headteacher.

**1. Applications**

An application must be made in writing **two weeks** in advance, with **appropriate evidence**, in advance of any intended absence by the parent/carer with whom the student normally resides. **If you are the child’s parent but you do not normally live with the child, you must seek the consent of the parent/carer with whom the child lives and that person should make the request.** Bristol Free School will respond to all requests for a leave of absence in writing either by email or letter.

Requests for absence for the following reasons will not be authorised:

* cheaper cost of holiday;
* availability of the desired accommodation;
* overlap with beginning or end of term; and
* during periods of national tests ie: GCSE examinations.

**2. Extended Periods of Absence**

In considering absence for extended trips overseas Bristol Free School **may** take account of the following:

* a visit to family overseas has a very different significance from a normal ‘holiday’;
* such visits may be important in terms of children’s identity and self-esteem as they grow up;
* parents may feel that the reasons for their visit outweigh the importance of their child’s uninterrupted attendance at school;
* the reasons for wishing to make a visit is more difficult, where huge distances and high costs are involved.
* whether or not the parent/carer has taken appropriate steps to minimise the impact of the absence on the school term.

Please note that the list above is not exhaustive and **does not** represent a list of reasons why leave may be authorised.

Whether the extended leave of absence is granted or not, there will be an expectation that the student undertakes some school-set work during this period. It is the student’s responsibility to collect appropriate work to complete.

**3. Safeguarding and Extended Leave**

For any request for extended absence, parents/carers will be invited to a pre-absence meeting to discuss our duty to safeguard students who are leaving the country for extended periods of time.

**4. Penalty Notices and Prosecution**

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child(ren) attend school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 (amended regulations 2013) to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the academy. A **Penalty Notice** may be requested if a student has a high number of unauthorised absences within an academic year. In cases where a penalty notice has been issued previously and/or there is a persistent failure to secure good attendance, we may request that the Local Authority supports us in a **criminal prosecution of the parents**.

**…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..**

**Part 2: to be completed by Bristol Free School**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Y7 attendance %** |  | **Days holiday taken previously in Y7** |  |
| **Y8 attendance %** |  | **Days holiday taken previously in Y8** |  |
| **Y9 attendance %** |  | **Days holiday taken previously in Y9** |  |
| **Y10 attendance %** |  | **Days holiday taken previously in Y10** |  |
| **Y11 attendance %** |  | **Days holiday taken previously in Y11** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **This Request is denied**  Please note that should you still choose to take your son /daughter out of school for these days, as we have not authorised the absence, the Local Authority may issue a fixed penalty notice. | |
| **The request is granted on condition that:**   1. All work that has been missed is completed, and 2. Attendance is at least good (above 96%) for the rest of the year. | |
| **Any other comments** | |
| **Signed (Headteacher)** | **Date** |