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 [admin@bristolfreeschool.org.uk](mailto:admin@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. **All parties marked as having parental consent on the school management system must agree to the leave. If parties with parental consent cannot agree, the case may be referred to Bristol City Council Social Care to arbitrate. Bristol Free School will only be able to stop a party with parental consent removing their child from school if there is a court order in place. All parties with an email address and parental consent marked on the school management system will receive confirmation of the leave request decision.** Bristol Free School will respond to all requests for a leave of absence in writing by email.

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. These legal interventions may be used for eight or more sessions (with one day being two sessions) of absence over a ten week period. 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** |