



Granting Leave of Absence for Students

In September 2013 changes to statutory regulation were made by the government which made it clear that Head Teachers may **not** grant leave of absence during term-time unless there are “exceptional circumstances”.

Parents/Carers should note that leave of absence for a normal family holiday cannot be granted as this is not deemed to be exceptional.

However, Wellfield School and our cluster of primary and junior schools, are aware that sometimes events in life mean that parents may have to ask for Leave of Absence of their child. Such exceptional circumstances could include time off school:

- When a parent who is a member of the armed forces returns home from a placement abroad and this is the only time available for a family holiday.
- For a special family event such as the wedding of an immediate family member.
- For your child to attend a sporting (or similar) competition.

Exceptional circumstances do **NOT** include:

- Finding a cheap holiday deal.
- Time off to celebrate a birthday.
- Time for a sibling to attend a sporting (or similar) competition which their brother/sister is taking part in.

If a parent feels that they have exceptional circumstances to request Leave of Absence for their child they must contact their school **as soon as possible** and **before** the time they are requesting the leave for. You will be asked to confirm if your child has siblings in any other school, and the schools will discuss whether your application meets the criteria for “exceptional circumstances”. The schools will consider requests on a case by case basis and inform parents / carers whether or not the leave they have requested has been granted. Parents are advised not to book any travel plans before being informed by the school as to the outcome of their application.

Parents should be clear that if an application for Leave of Absence is not granted, then the Educational Welfare service will become involved. This may involve a parent being interviewed by an Educational Welfare Officer and/or the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine). Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued to both parents, and if they are not paid within a specified period, the penalty will be increased. Parents issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice may appeal against it to the Local Authority if they disagree with the school’s decision for not granting Leave of Absence.

If you have any questions regarding Leave of Absence please contact your child's school where further assistance can be given.

This information is brought to you by Wellfield Community School and our Primary partners: Blackhall Primary School, Cassop Primary School, Deaf Hill Primary School, Hesleden Primary School, Hutton Henry Primary School, St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary, Kelloe Primary School, Ludworth Primary School, Shotton Primary School, Thornley Primary School, Wheatley Hill Primary School, Wingate Infant School and Wingate Junior School.



Blackhall Primary School



Thornley Primary School



Shotton Primary School



Wingate Junior School



Wheatley Hill
Community Primary & Nursery School

