



Schools for Every Child

Guidance on Requests for Time Away from School for Ongoing Exceptional Activities

The Trust recognises that, on occasion, pupils may be involved in exceptional activities outside school, such as elite sport, performance, or national-level events. We are committed to supporting pupils to pursue their talents and aspirations wherever possible. At the same time, the Trust has a clear duty of care to ensure that every pupil receives a full-time, high-quality education and is supported to reach their full academic potential. Regular school attendance remains a critical factor in pupils' learning, progress, wellbeing, and safeguarding.

Decision-making responsibility

Requests for pupils to be released from school during the school day for ongoing or repeated activities will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The decision rests with the Headteacher (or Head of School). There is no automatic entitlement to time away from school for external activities.

Factors considered

When considering a request, the Head will take into account a balanced range of evidence, including:

- Likelihood of success in the chosen activity, including evidence that the pupil is operating at an exceptional or elite level.
- The pupil's current attendance rate and any existing attendance concerns.
- A written report from the pupil's class teacher, commenting on engagement, progress, resilience, and readiness to manage learning alongside external commitments.
- A written report from the professional coach, organisation, or provider requesting the time away from school. This should clearly explain the level of competition, training demands, and expected outcomes.
- An analysis of the pupil's current academic standards, including standardised or scaled scores, measured against individual target scores set using Fischer Family Trust benchmarks based on prior attainment. This will be a key factor.

Review and ongoing monitoring

Any approval granted will be time-limited and reviewed half-termly. Approval may be withdrawn at any time if:

- Attendance declines
- Academic progress slows or falls below expected levels
- The balance between education and external commitments is no longer in the pupil's best interests

The school retains the right to cancel approval immediately if concerns arise. Where a request is approved, any period of time during which a pupil is released from school for an external activity will be treated as authorised absence. During this time, the pupil is not under the supervision or responsibility of the school. Full responsibility for the pupil's safety, welfare, supervision, travel, and conduct rests with the parent/carer and the external provider. The school accepts no liability for the pupil during these periods.

Appeals process

Parents may appeal a Head's decision by submitting a written appeal to the Trust Executive Leadership Team through the school office. The Team will review the process and evidence used to reach the decision.

The outcome of this review will be final.