

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Please read the leave of absence regulations on the following pages carefully before submitting a request.

**1. Details of family**

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Initials and Family name |  |
| Address                  |  |
| Town/City                |  |
| Telephone number         |  |

**2. Details of your child(ren)**

**Group/School**

|               |  |  |
|---------------|--|--|
| Full name     |  |  |
| Date of Birth |  |  |
| Full name     |  |  |
| Date of Birth |  |  |
| Full name     |  |  |
| Date of Birth |  |  |

**3. Details of the requested release**

|                                                                                                                      |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| First day of absence                                                                                                 |  |
| Last day of absence                                                                                                  |  |
| Total numbers of days required                                                                                       |  |
| Total numbers of days requested during the current school year                                                       |  |
| Did your child request leave attached to a school holiday last school year? If so, specify when and for what reason. |  |
| Reason for this leave                                                                                                |  |

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature Parent:** \_\_\_\_\_

| Permission                       | Yes / No |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Comments                         |          |
| Signature<br>Head Primary School |          |

### 1. Compulsory School Attendance and Holidays

Because it is of the utmost importance that children attend school, attendance is compulsory here in the Netherlands. Agreements have been reached about education in this country.

One of these agreements is that pupils may *not* just stay away from school when they like. Only when there is talk of 'extenuating circumstances' is it possible, sometimes, to make an exception to this rule.

If there are exceptional circumstances of any kind that lead you to think that your child cannot attend school, you must still adhere to the rules and regulations for these circumstances. This folder explains these exceptional and extenuating circumstances and the relevant rules and regulations.

### 2. Extra leave due to religious duties

When your child has obligations to fulfil that arise from their religion/personal philosophy, they have the right to special leave. The table below shows when and if this applies.

| Obligation                            | no. of days |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Chinese                               |             |
| New Year                              | 1           |
| Hindustani                            |             |
| Holi                                  | 1           |
| Divali                                | 1           |
| Islamic                               |             |
| Id al-adha                            | 3           |
| Id al-fitr                            | 3           |
| Jewish                                |             |
| Easter                                | 4           |
| (Shavuot) Festival of Weeks           | 2           |
| Jewish New Year                       | 2           |
| Day of Atonement                      | 1           |
| Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)         | 2           |
| Shemini Atzeret (8 <sup>th</sup> day) | 1           |
| Simchat Torah (Rejoicing)             | 1           |

For Sabbath and other Jewish feast days the rule is, only those days count where one is not permitted to work, carry or write at all.

There will be no dispensation granted (there is no right to it) for cultural gatherings or festivals.

### 3. Taking holidays during school term

The main rule is: it is not permitted to go on holiday during school term (so, outside of school holidays, it is forbidden). Almere is in 'regio noord'. Your child is therefore only free from school during the allocated school holidays for this region.

Deviations to this rule may only occur if your family was/is unable to travel during official school holidays because:

- One or both of the parents/guardians works in the hotel/catering industry or the agricultural sector of the community
- **AND** there is demonstrable proof of extra work needing done during the official summer holiday period.

In such a case, the school head may grant your child ten consecutive school days off in one year to allow (the only) family holiday in that school year.

#### Request

Your request must be accompanied by an employer's elucidation, noting the specific problems of summer peak period for your specific occupation.

You must also comply with the following conditions:

- Hand in any written request to the school head at least 8 weeks in advance. This gives time to handle any objections (see part 7).
- The actual holiday period may only encompass 10 *consecutive* school days and may not be spread over the school year.
- This holiday may not take place in the first two weeks of the school year.

#### Attention:

There will be no dispensation given for mere organizational circumstances at your place of employment such as timetables and rosters in general. See part 4.

There is no such thing as a 'right' to ten days off school, in any shape or form.

#### **The circumstances, once leave is given**

If you have been granted extra leave but circumstances dictate that your child can only return later than is planned, it is of the utmost importance that you contact the school head – no longer than 2 days after any hindrance starting. This will help to prevent any possible misunderstandings.

The school head or the school attendance officer could possibly deem the absence as admissible. The request is then settled and the case closed. It could however happen that the absence is deemed inadmissible and in such a case, the school head is duty bound to report it to the relevant party. The school attendance officer will then decide if charges are made. In this case, read part 8.

#### **Justifying absence**

To properly judge an absence, the school head (or school attendance officer) requires evidence of said absence. Think for instance of (copies of) say, a garage invoice by a car breakdown, or flight tickets to prove overbooking by an airline.

Unfortunately, it can also occur that your child or other family member takes ill during a holiday, causing your child to return to school later than planned. In cases such as this, it is of the utmost import that you produce a letter from the (foreign) doctor stating the nature of the illness, the duration and the seriousness. This will help to prevent misunderstandings.

#### **4. Leave taken due to 'important circumstances'**

'Important' or 'exceptional' circumstances covers those situations that are beyond the control of parents/guardians and/or the child. You can request time off school when this sort of thing applies. Any request must be in writing to the school head - and do supply them with the necessary proofs and written reasons showing why you need it.

You may request time off school under the following circumstances:

- The whole family is moving house: maximum 1 school day.
- Attending the wedding of a blood relative/in-law (to the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree)
  - o In the Netherlands: max. 2 school days
  - o Abroad: max. 5 school days
- Serious illness of a blood relative/in-law (to the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree) where speed is of the essence and you must immediately depart, max. 10 school days. The absence will be discussed and judged in hindsight.
- Death of a blood relative/in-law
  - o 1<sup>st</sup> degree, within NL – max. 5 school days
  - o 2<sup>nd</sup> degree, within NL – max. 2 school days
  - o 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> degree, within NL – max. 1 school day
  - o 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> degree, abroad – max. 5 school days
- Celebrating a silver, ruby or golden jubilee (work related) (25, 40, 50 years resp.) and 12½, 25<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> or 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary of parents/guardians or grandparents – max. 1 school day.

#### **Explaining degrees of blood relation (or in-law)**

(from the child's point of view)

|                         |                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> degree: | parent/guardian                                                                                                           |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> degree: | sister or brother, grandparent                                                                                            |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> degree: | uncle or aunt (brother of sister of the parent/guardian), niece or nephew (a brother's/sister's child), great-grandparent |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> degree: | cousin (parents' brother's/sister's child), great uncle/great aunt (siblings to a grandparent), great, great grandparent  |

#### **The following circumstance will not be considered important**

No importance will be given to the circumstances as listed here and your child has therefore no right to (extra) leave for:

- Family visits/reunions abroad;
- (Great) grandparents' birthdays;
- Meeting (great) grandparents for the first time or after a long period
- Time off school for a child because other children in the family are already, or are still, free;
- A very long absence, such as a world tour or a sabbatical;
- Cheaper tickets at times other than school holidays;
- When offered a paid holiday by any third party during other than official school holidays;
- A holiday you won that is to take place outside official school holidays;
- Leaving early (or later) to avoid the holiday rush;
- There being no other time to book than during school term;
- Problems due to the spread of school holidays in NL (NB: Almere is classed as 'regio noord');
- Timetables and rosters at your place of work whether transport company, taxi drivers, police, fire-brigade... whatever.

- Taking part during school time in trips organised by various sport clubs, music classes or dance schools... etc.
- Budding talents: competitions, special lessons etc. – all are non-admissible during school time. Provision of teaching staff is not considered an alternative;
- A combination of all of the above.

These guidelines also apply to those requests for (up to) ten school days off where the school head will give permission (or not).

#### **5. Asking for leave and decisions on same**

If you wish to put in a request for extra leave, you will need the special request form. This is available from the school head. Each request for leave is of course different therefore each is judged individually on its merits by the school head or the school attendance officer.

##### **Request for up to 10 days leave from school**

Hand in the completed request form to the school head, 8 weeks before the date the leave is to commence. Add any paper evidence to the form that may support your request (something that in some way 'proves' the necessity).

The school head will contact you within 8 weeks of you handing in the request, with their decision. You will receive written confirmation of this decision, for or against.

##### **Request for more than 10 days leave from school**

Hand in the completed request form to the school attendance officer, 8 weeks before the date the leave is to commence. You will receive an invitation to discuss and elucidate your request. You will be required to produce evidence of the necessity of the leave requested (something that in some way 'proves' this necessity), so do always take them with you to the interview.

Following upon the interview, the school attendance officer will contact the school head to discuss it with them – this means they will require information from them too – and this information will be taken into account. The school attendance officer will contact you within 8 weeks of you handing in the request, with their decision.

#### **6. Subsequent decisions on (extra) leave taken**

There are circumstances that could demand your leaving a.s.a.p., or for instance that your child was unable to return to school on time because of said circumstances.

Such a case could mean that it was impossible for you to request leave in advance. This would then be subsequently decided upon, so 'in hindsight'. It is very important that you provide evidence for the necessity of your sudden departure or later return.

- If your child was absent for up to 10 days, the school head will assess the absence.
- If your child was absent for longer than 10 days, the school attendance officer will assess the absence.

The school head or said school attendance officer may decide the following:

- The absence is permissible. In this case, you will receive a letter stating that there will be no further consequences for the extra absence and the case will be closed.
- The absence was not permissible. See part 8.

#### **7. Unlawful absences**

If you prevent your child from attending school without prior permission from the school head (or the school attendance officer), this will be classed as an unlawful, school absence. You are in fact breaking the law on school attendance and are punishable by law. The school head must report this to the school attendance officer.

The school attendance officer will invite you to attend a talk and will then decide if charges are to be made. If this is the case, you will be given the opportunity to explain, whereupon the school attendance officer will send the written charge sheet to the relevant public courts in Lelystad. There, they will decide how to proceed and you could be summonsed to appear before the public prosecutor, and/or perhaps fined.