

SUBJECT:

**TEACHERS' ABSENCES NOT EXCEEDING
THREE WORKING DAYS**

**CIRCULAR NUMBER:
2014/18**

**DATE OF ISSUE:
8 August 2014**

AUDIENCE:

- Principals and Boards of Governors of Grant-aided Schools;
- Education and Library Boards;
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta;
- Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education;
- Governing Bodies Association;
- Teachers' Unions.

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS:

This Circular updates the arrangements that took effect from 1 August 1990 in relation to teachers being absent for 3 or less working days

ENQUIRIES:

Any enquiries about the contents of this Circular should be addressed to the relevant Employing Authority.

GOVERNORS' AWARENESS

Essential.

STATUS OF CONTENTS

Action by Boards of Governors and Employing Authorities.

Information for Principals, Vice-Principals and Teachers.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Not Applicable.

SUPERSEDED DOCUMENTS

DE Circulars
1990/32
1991/46

EXPIRY DATE:

Not applicable

DE WEBSITE:

This Circular is available on
<http://www.deni.gov.uk>

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TEACHERS' ABSENCES NOT EXCEEDING THREE WORKING DAYS

1. With effect from 1 August 1990 decisions regarding leave for teachers who are absent from school for three working days or less became a matter entirely for employing authorities.
2. In the interests of uniformity of treatment of all teachers and as a guide to employers in their exercise of their employment responsibilities the Teacher' Salaries and Conditions of Service Committee (Schools), which is representative of the Department, Employing Authorities and the recognised teachers' organisations, agreed a recommended course of action in respect of particular absences. This has recently been updated and is set out in the attached Appendix.
3. As previously advised, in the case of absences of three days or less which are not provided for in the Appendix, Employing Authorities should exercise their discretion in a sensible manner bearing in mind their responsibilities to the needs of pupils.
4. With the introduction of Local Management of Schools in April 1991 responsibility for decisions on leave of absence in the case of schools with fully delegated budgets rests with individual Boards of Governors (who may not necessarily be the Employing Authority) but applications for leave should continue to be considered under the terms of this updated agreement. In the case of absences which are not provided for in the Appendix, Boards of Governors should consult with the respective Employing Authority – Education and Library Boards in the case of controlled schools and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools in the case of Catholic Maintained schools. Voluntary Grammar schools should consult the Association of Governing Bodies of Grammar Schools.
5. These arrangements replace the provisions in Circulars 1991/46 and 1990/30 which are hereby revoked.

CAUSE OF ABSENCE

RECOMMENDED ACTION

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| 1. Death of a near relative, or other relative being a member of the teachers' household. | Up to 3 days leave with pay. |
| 2. Death of other relative | 1 day's leave with pay, but where extensive travel is involved, 2 days may be granted. |
| 3. Attendance at funeral other than that of a relative. | Leave with pay only where attendance is a necessary social duty. The period of absence should be the minimum part of the day necessary to fulfil the duty. |
| 4. Marriage of a teacher. | 3 days special leave with pay if marriage takes place (a) outside a period of closing of school; or (b) within a period of closing other than the 'long' vacation. |
| 5. Attendance at a wedding | 1 day's leave with pay if the bride or groom is a near relative or other relative or if the teacher is a bridesmaid or best man, but, where extensive travel is involved, up to 2 days may be granted. |
| 6. Serious illness of a member of the Teacher's household. | Up to 3 days leave with pay. |
| 7. Attendance at examinations | Leave with pay for each day on which an examination is attended provided the examination is designed to lead to additional qualifications. |
| 8. Attendance at interviews in connection with other teaching appointments or other appointments within the NI education service. | Up to 1 day's leave with pay. |
| 9. Attendance as representative at teachers' unions meetings. | Leave with pay provided Frequency of absence is not |

10. Attendance at conference of teachers' organisations.	excessive. Leave with pay.
11. Attendance at conferences, meetings etc.	<p>Leave with pay for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at meetings of Education & Library Boards and CCMS or committees of such bodies. • Attendance at meetings of statutory bodies or bodies set up by the Department of Education of which the teacher is a member of other meetings arranged by the Department. • Attendance at conference where such attendance is likely to be beneficial to the teacher in the discharge of his school duties. • Attendance at youth welfare activities e.g. Girl Guides, Community Relations Projects etc.
12. Absence due to disruption of daily travel facilities e.g. flood, snow, transport strike etc.	Leave with pay but regard must be given to individual circumstances.
13. Attendance at Ordination or Profession of near relative.	1 day's leave with pay, but where extensive travel is involved, 2 days may be granted.
14. Attendance at Court, Industrial or other statutory Tribunal as a witness, plaintiff or defendant.	Leave with pay.
15. Attendance at Graduation Ceremony involving teacher or near relative.	1 day's leave with pay, but where extensive travel is involved up to 2 days may be granted.
16. Participating in, or officiating at sporting events of international, national or provincial standing as an amateur.	Leave with pay.
17. A teacher other than the spouse/partner of the child's mother (e.g. father, sister, mother) if nominated by the child's mother as the main carer at the time of the child's birth.	3 days leave with pay.

18. Serious burglary or serious damage to house.	1 day's leave with pay.
19. Lay person on bench of juvenile court.	Time off with pay less any loss of earnings allowance received by teachers for their service on not more than 4 days in the school year.
20. Visit to, or accompanying spouse on special visit to a medical consultant or one parent accompanying own child on a special visit to a medical consultant.	Up to 1 day's leave with pay.
21. Accompanying own child to receive Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award.	Up to 2 days leave with pay depending on travel arrangements.
22. Attending own child's graduation ceremony outside Northern Ireland.	Up to 2 days leave with pay depending on travel arrangements.
23. House removal.	1 day's leave with pay.
24. Birthday, New Year or Special Honours Award to a near relative.	1 day's leave with pay, but where extensive travel is involved, 2 days may be granted.
25. Preparation for examination.	Leave without pay.
26. Attendance at music festival, feis, etc, as a competitor.	Leave without pay unless a festival is of national or international standing.
27. Acting as presiding officer, polling clerk etc, at an election.	Leave without pay if school is in operation.
28. Attendance at religious observances when this is required by the regulations of the teacher's religious denomination.	Leave without pay provided the teacher gives notice to his employing authority at the beginning of the school year of the days required.

NOTES

1. The term 'near relative' means father, mother, husband, wife, brother, sister, son or daughter, grandparents, father-in-law and mother-in-law.
2. The term 'other relative' means sister-in-law, brother-in-law, nephew, niece, aunt, uncle or guardian.