

Dear Head Teacher/Principal,

**Re: Pupil request to attend Sea Cadet activities**

This letter accompanies a request by the carer of one of your pupils for time away from school to attend Sea Cadet activities. As a youth development charity working with schools across the UK, I am mindful that any request to spend time out of school is significant. This letter I trust provides some background to the charity of which this pupil is a member to help place the request in context and provide further information in support of that request.

**Overview:** The charity, Sea Cadets works with 14,000 young people in 400 UK communities. We provide a range of out of school activity some of which takes place during term time. This includes paddle-sports, rowing and dinghy sailing, from basic to intermediate level, with certificates and nationally accredited qualifications as well as the chance to take part in national events some sponsored by our biggest supporter the Royal Navy.

The opportunities we offer young people is critical, providing vital learning experiences through structured activities which offer scope for them to develop transferrable skills like teamwork, leadership and problem solving, helping them to overcome challenges and prepare for life today whatever they want to do when they leave school. You can find out more about our impact here: [www.sea-cadets.org](http://www.sea-cadets.org)

To ensure that we respect school's authority and to ensure we are in line with current government views we have liaised with the Schools attendance team, Department for Education regarding the principle of time away from school. They have provided us with the following statement in support of our work:

*"Parents may wish to apply for a leave of absence; or ask the school to consider approving the training as a supervised educational activity. For a leave of absence, parents would apply to the head teacher, demonstrating that exceptional circumstances warrant taking their child out of school. The head teacher will consider the request and decide whether they agree that their case is exceptional.*

*Schools have the authority to arrange, or agree for pupils to undertake part of their education outside the school premises and this can be recorded as an 'approved educational activity' in accordance with regulation 6(4)(a) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The regulation defines that an approved educational activity is an activity, which takes place outside the school premises, which is; approved by the school; of an educational nature; and is supervised by someone authorised by the school.*

*While the department supports cadet activity and the benefits, it can bring to an individual; it is wholly for the school to decide whether a particular cadet activity can be considered as educational. The school will also have to decide whether to approve the pupil's participation and whether to authorise someone to supervise the activity on the school's behalf."*

School Attendance policy team, Department for Education.



**Courses and qualifications:** Your pupil will already be a member of Sea Cadets attending one of our nationwide units every week. Our core activities cover the full spectrum of boating, from canoeing through to going to sea on one of our motor or sail vessels. We also undertake many other activities from engineering to cookery and orienteering.

All courses are carried out by qualified instructors who are either employees of the charity or volunteers in safe and secure environments. Courses lead to additional internal and external qualifications with external qualifications including first aid, RYA boating, Duke of Edinburgh and BTECs. Every young person completing two years qualifies for a level 1 BTEC in team work, personal skills, and citizenship.

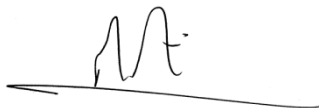
**Term time activity:** Courses run throughout the year to offer the experience to as many as possible. This means some of our activities are in term time. The importance of students keeping up to date with their studies is always reinforced and where appropriate time is provided to complete home work.

I recognise that your curriculum will be packed. Time spent with us is however not a holiday. For many it will be a life changing experience and the impact on positive behaviours is well documented. This can complement school activity and offer valuable skills:

*“Cadets play an important role in our society. They help connect and raise awareness of our armed forces with wider society. They provide significant development for the individuals – young people and instructor – practical skills, strong values and leadership. They also gain awareness of what future employers value, and the breadth of career opportunities in our armed forces.”* Paul Kett, Director General for the Education Standards Directorate, Department for Education.

I hope you will be able to grant the time away requested by the pupil's carer, if you have any queries please contact the local Sea Cadet unit referenced in the accompanying letter, or me, and we will be happy to assist.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M J Coles', written over a horizontal line.

Martin J Coles  
Chief Executive Officer