Bexton Primary School and Nursery

Blackhill Lane, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 9DB | 01565 632816

"Together we can make a difference"

Request for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances

Regular school attendance is essential to children's learning, progress and wellbeing. Every school day provides valuable opportunities to develop knowledge, skills, friendships and confidence, and we appreciate the support of our families in ensuring that children attend school regularly and arrive on time.

We recognise that there may occasionally be circumstances in which parents need to request leave of absence during term time. However, there are clear legal requirements governing when such leave can be authorised, and we ask all families to consider these carefully before submitting an application.

When can leave be granted?

Under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, Headteachers may only grant leave of absence during term time in specific circumstances, including where exceptional circumstances apply.

Each application will be considered individually, taking account of the circumstances presented. Any decision to authorise leave, including the number of days permitted, is at the Headteacher's discretion.

Holidays, family trips and other leisure activities during term time are not normally considered exceptional circumstances, and there is no automatic entitlement to term-time leave.

How to apply

Applications must be made **in advance**, using this form, by a parent or carer with whom the child normally lives. Requests should be submitted as far in advance as possible, with sufficient information to explain the exceptional circumstances.

Parents and carers will be notified of the Headteacher's decision through the return of a completed copy of this form. Leave cannot be authorised retrospectively.

What happens if leave is taken without permission?

Where leave is taken without authorisation, or a child remains absent beyond the period agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Under the national framework for attendance, schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate when a pupil accumulates **10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks**.

This can include any combination of unauthorised absences, such as holidays during term time, arriving after the register has closed or absence without an acceptable reason. The 10-week period can span different school terms or academic years.

Where appropriate, cases may be referred to Cheshire East Council for consideration of a penalty notice, in accordance with national guidance and the local authority's Code of Conduct.

Penalty notices are issued to each liable parent or carer, for each child, and are payable to the local authority, as outlined below:

Penalty notice	Amount
First penalty notice	£160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days
Second penalty notice to the same parent for the same child within 3 years	£160, paid within 28 days (no reduction)
Third occasion within 3 years	A penalty notice cannot be issued. The local authority will consider other action instead, which may include prosecution.

If a penalty notice is not paid in full within 28 days, the local authority will decide whether to prosecute or to withdraw the notice.

Application form: please complete all sections and return to the school office

1. About your child

Child's name		**Date of birth**	
Class		**Class teacher**	
Brothers or sisters at Bexton included in this request (names and classes):			

2. Leave requested

First day of absence		**Date returning to school**	
School days requested			

3. Reason for the request

Please explain the exceptional circumstances for this request, and why the absence must be taken during term time.

Supporting evidence attached (for example, a letter or appointment details): ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Parent/carer declaration

Parent/carer name		**Relationship to child**	
Contact telephone			

☐ The child named above normally lives with me.

☐ I have read the information on this form. I understand that if this request is not authorised and my child is absent, or if my child is absent for longer than agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and, if the threshold explained on this form is met, the school will refer the case to Cheshire East Council, which may issue a penalty notice.

Signature		**Date**	

For school use only

Date received		**Received by**	
Decision	☐ Authorised ☐ Declined	**School days authorised**	
Comments			
Headteacher's signature		**Date parent informed**	