

Withdrawal from Learning Application: For Exceptional Circumstances

Bennett Memorial School



Did you know that there are just 190 school days in a school year? That means there are already 175 days set aside for weekends, holidays, family visits and rewarding days out. We believe every school day counts to give your child the greatest opportunity of attaining a good education and to support a happy and healthy future.

With 175 days already marked out as 'non-school-days', you should have an exceptional reason to withdraw your child from school. The following are considered illegitimate reasons and are likely to be rejected and unauthorised:

- **Trips to visit family/friends**
- **Your child's birthday**
- **Family holidays**
- **Tickets to sports/culture events**

100% is recognised as an expected level of school attendance. If your child is out of school on average for 1.5 days each term, then their attendance will be below 95% and they will be spending 184 days out of school and only 181 days in school. Should your child need time off due to illness, this figure will quickly become even lower. Because five days of school equates to 25 hours of learning in lessons, catching up with extra work out of school is unrealistic, particularly as your child will miss out on the expert guidance from their subject teacher.

From a young person's perspective, missing schools means:

- **Missing out on the input from their expert subject teacher thus missing learning and not achieving their potential**
- **Struggling to catch up on work and make sense of future work**
- **Disconnecting with school friends, which can lead to low self-esteem and affect mental health**
- **Not establishing a routine, which helps to build resilience and prepares a student for their future working life**

What is good attendance?		
Above 98%	Between 98 and 95%	Below 95%
Good	Some concern	Serious concern

The vast majority of headteachers do not authorise any absence in term time, in fact, many schools refused 100% of requests last year.

Your child has the right to a full time education and the opportunities that this can bring. We hope that you will work in partnership with us to make sure that your child attends school every day, allowing them access to the education they deserve.

Please think carefully whether it is in your child's best interest to request this absence.

I should also make you aware that from 1st January 2016 a new Code of Conduct has been applied, and any 10 unauthorised sessions, which is the equivalent of 5 days, accrued within a 100 session period (50 days) will be routinely picked up by the County's Education Welfare Office and can result in a Penalty Notice being issued and a fine may be incurred. The penalty is £60 per parent, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If you don't pay the fine you may be prosecuted.

To be completed by parent/carer:

Child's Name..... Tutor group

Child's current attendance (available from BSpace)

Date(s) of any previous requests

Date of withdrawal from learning..... Date of return to learning.....

Total number of learning days to be missed

Reason withdrawal from learning is requested:

Name of Parent/Carer

Signed:..... Date:

Please ensure you are giving at least 14 day's notice of the proposed absence. Completed forms should be returned to Mrs Wagstaff at leaveofabsence@bennett.kent.sch.uk

Headteacher decision:

Name of child:..... Class..... Year Group.....

Date of telephone interview:.....

Date decision form sent home:.....

Authorised: Your request has been authorised for the following dates: /...../..... to/...../.....

Unauthorised: Your request has been unauthorised for the following dates:/...../..... to/...../.....

Penalty Notice update to KCC attaching telephone interview log if applicable

Headteacher signature..... Date:.....