



## Bexton Primary School

*"Together we can make a difference"*

### Attendance and Punctuality Policy

**Name of school:** Bexton Primary School

**Date of review:** Spring 2018

**New review date:** Spring 2021

### Introduction

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Regular attendance at school or alternative provision is a legal requirement and "The Education Act" 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a parent to fail to secure their child's regular attendance at school. The amendments to the 2006 Regulations **remove** any reference to *family holidays, extended leave and the statutory threshold of ten school days*.

If children or young people do not attend school they will not achieve or reach their maximum potential. Research shows that children taken out of school may never catch up on work missed, and the absence may affect outcomes and progress they make at school.

### Aims

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- ◆ To foster a climate where regular attendance and punctuality are valued by the school community – teachers, parents and pupils.
- ◆ To provide a framework, with agreed roles and responsibilities.
- ◆ To provide support and guidance for parents and pupils.

### Communication

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The importance of regular attendance is discussed and explained at the Reception new intake induction meetings held in the summer term for children about to enter Reception Class. This reiterates that parents and children should arrive at school on time, so that each child can be given

the best possible start to the school day. It is also stressed that young children particularly should be collected promptly, as they can become upset if left behind on their own.

Children are also admitted to school at various times of the year, and into various Year Groups. All parents will be issued with a "Parents Handbook" when their children start school. A link to the Attendance and Punctuality Policy is included in this.

Each academic year, the school reminds parents/carers via newsletter of the rules relating to requests for leave during term time, including details of the issuing of fixed penalty notices.

At the end of the year, each child's attendance and punctuality is analysed and reported to parents on their child's school report.

## **Registration**

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Bexton Primary School uses a computerised registration system (Inventory) and the register is completed in the morning at 8.50am (Juniors) and 9.00am (Infants) and in the afternoon at 1:15pm for all mainstream classes. Doors are opened ten minutes early to encourage a prompt start to the day.

Any pupil will receive a late mark after 8.50am (Juniors) and 9.00am (Infants) up to 9:15am. Any pupil arriving after 9:15am will be classified as late after the register has closed and pupils arriving after 10am will be classified as being absent on an unauthorised basis; parents / guardians of pupils who show persistent lateness after the register has closed may be subject to prosecution by the local authority.

All pupils who are late must report to the office and sign in on the Inventory system

## **Concerns**

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If there are concerns about a child's non-attendance or punctuality, the class teacher consults the Head Teacher immediately. Details of attendance or late percentage are extracted from the computer database. The Head Teacher will highlight any concerns to parents in writing. If absences or lateness persist, the Head Teacher may contact the Education Welfare Officer.

The Senior Leadership Team at Bexton will review attendance at least termly and contact parents if persistent attendance gives any cause for concern.

The Educational Welfare Officer will monitor the schools attendance registers at least once a year and discuss any attendance issues with the school.

### **Absence through Illness/ Medical Appointment**

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All parents should contact Bexton Primary School before 9:15 am on each day that their child will be absent or late, either in person or by telephone. A telephone call is acceptable and there is a dedicated answerphone on which messages can be left; these are entered on the computerised registration system with: Date, Child, Class, and Reason for Absence. Parents may call at the school office to notify their child's non-attendance. Failure to notify the school by 9:15 am will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

Parents / guardians of pupils who show persistent unauthorised absence may be subject to prosecution by the Local Authority.

All information is used for class registers. If no notification is received about a child's absence, the admin assistant will attempt to contact the parent/guardian.

Bexton Primary School continues to provide as much education as the child's medical condition allows to keep up the momentum of their learning. The school monitors attendance of those pupils who are absent from school because of short-term or chronic illness, and close links are maintained with parents.

The reintegration of children into school after a long absence through ill health is considered a high priority. The school consults parents about general concerns, medical issues and the timing and pace of return. Staff, including the class teacher, teaching assistants, and home or hospital tutor meets to discuss the return to school. Friends and other pupils are encouraged to help the child settle back in school. Extra support is provided (subject to available resources) after an analysis of the child's needs.

### **Requests for leave of absence for holidays / exceptional circumstances**

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The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** make it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Parents have **no** entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday in term time. The Head Teacher (or in her absence the Deputy Head Teacher) will determine whether the exceptional circumstance ruling applies, if not the application will be declined.

Requests for leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances must be made in writing to the Head Teacher on the school's standard form (see appendix A). Parents will be advised of the outcome of their request through return of a copy of the form with the request agreed or declined

by the Head Teacher. A copy of this form will be retained in the school office in the school attendance file.

If the requested leave of absence is not authorised but taken by the parents despite this, the school will mark the child as absent with a "G" code. The school may then follow the option of applying to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued.

The Local Authority will only issue Fixed Penalty Notices requested by a school in response to a holiday related unauthorised absence where the school has provided the necessary paperwork. All these documents should be emailed to the Local Authority as well as the Penalty Notice Request Form for unauthorised Leave of Absence.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

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Schools must report to the Local Authority any child who has had at least 10 sessions (5 full days) of unauthorised absence in an academic year. The school may report this as soon as an unauthorised leave of absence is taken, or through their half-termly reviews of pupil attendance. The Local Authority may then issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for £60 per parent / carer per child, to be paid within 21 days of the issue of the said notice. An explanatory letter will be sent, alongside the Fixed Penalty Notice. The Notice gives parent(s)/carer(s) the opportunity to pay a penalty fine instead of being prosecuted in the criminal courts.

After 21 days the amount payable rises to £120 per child per parent/carer, up to the 28<sup>th</sup> day.

If full payment is not received by the 28<sup>th</sup> day, a summons will be sent to the parent/carer informing of their need to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the grounds that they have failed to secure their child's regular attendance at school.

If parents are found guilty of this offence in the Magistrates' Court, on conviction they will have a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £1000.

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or more often if felt necessary.



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**REQUEST FOR LEAVE DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind.

Regular attendance at school or alternative provision is a legal requirement and “The Education Act” 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a parent to fail to secure their child’s regular attendance at school. Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence (holiday) during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, and parents have no entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday in term time.

**PUPIL DETAILS**

Name: ..... Date of Birth: .....

Class Teacher: .....

Dates of Requested Absence .....

Total Number of Days Requested .....

**Please state precisely why this absence is to be taken during term time, bearing in mind the comments above.**

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Parent/Guardian Name: .....

Signature: .....

I understand that keeping my child off school for any longer than agreed by the school will result in Unauthorised Absence.

**Head Teacher's Response**

Authorised / Declined .....( Head Teacher)

Date: .....