



Application for Exceptional Leave

Guidance for Parents/Carers

In line with government guidance, parents/carers should complete this form and return it to school for consideration before any arrangements are made. Upon receipt of your request, the Headteacher will decide whether the absence can be authorised based on the reasons provided and in line with government regulations and Local Authority guidance. Where school is unable to authorise your request, the Headteacher (or their representative) may arrange to meet with you to discuss your application.

Exceptional leave is only for rare, significant and unavoidable circumstances. Family holidays, trips of a purely social nature, or leave taken for the purpose of obtaining a reduced cost are **not** normally authorised.

School attendance – key points:

Regular attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. The local authority and Athena Learning Trust expect that all parents/careers ensure their child attends school whenever possible. Absence during school time is largely prohibited by regulation and hinders academic progress. **Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly.**

There is no entitlement to take a child out of school during term time. Only the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances can authorise any leave during term time.

Additional factors for consideration

- Is attendance already a concern or below 96% this academic year?
- Will your child miss national tests/examinations or key assessments?
- Is your child in transition (e.g., Reception starters or the first term in a new school)?
- Has leave during term time already been taken in this or a previous school year?
- Has a sibling previously had a similar request refused?
- Are any absences recorded as unauthorised during the previous school year?

Important legal information

If, after these discussions, you make the decision to take your child out of school you will be committing an offence under the Education Act and need to be aware of the following:

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be **committing an offence under the Education Act 1996**. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. **Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.**



If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be **committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996**. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. **Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days.**

Importantly, **finest per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period**. Once this limit has been reached other action, such as a parenting order or prosecution, will be considered.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you **could get a fine of up to £2,500**. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs. Absence not authorised by the school may also result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Only the local authority uses money raised from fines to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government. 'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

Please do not make any travel arrangements until you have received the Headteacher's decision. Making arrangements in advance may result in unauthorised absence if your request is refused.



Section 2 – Office use

Date application received:	
Pupil's current attendance % (year to date):	
How many missed sessions to current date (unauthorised):	
How many minutes of learning missed due to lateness to current date:	
Any previous holidays/leave taken? What were they?	
Number of school days requested in this application:	

Section 3 – To be completed by the Headteacher

Does the request meet 'Exceptional leave' criteria? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Request approved? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If not approved, referral for Penalty Notice? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, date of referral: _____	
Headteacher comments around the decision:	

Headteacher signature: _____

Print name: _____ Date: _____

Section 4 – Decision communicated by the Admin/Attendance Team

Family informed of decision by: Phone Email In person

Staff member signature: _____ Date: _____

Recorded on MIS (date): _____

Please submit this form as early as possible and before making any arrangements. Keep a copy for your records.