



## Who can make the decision not to agree the requested leave of absence?

The decision is entirely at the Head teachers discretion. There is no statutory criteria for exceptional circumstances but some of the following reasons may apply:

- Service personnel returning from active deployment
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the production or confirmation from the organisation/company
- Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems.

Evidence must be provided

- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis

This is not an exhaustive list. Head teachers must consider the individual circumstances of each case when making a decision on this matter. Leave is only acceptable against exceptional circumstances and should not be granted on the basis of attendance record, academic performance or the 'experience' offered by being out of school.

## What evidence do I need for not meeting the criteria for exceptional circumstances when the request is for medical reasons??

If the request for leave of absence is for medical recuperation and does not have supporting evidence from a medical professional, then a Penalty Notice may be issued if the leave is taken without the permission of the Head teacher.

## Can a leave of absence be agreed retrospectively?

No. If parents/carers have not applied to the school in advance then the request cannot be agreed and should be coded as an unauthorised absence. Leave of absence cannot be applied for retrospectively.

## Does the school or the LA make the decision to pursue a Penalty Notice?

Following the parent(s) taking the child/ren out of school on an unauthorised leave of absence, which meets the criteria for the issuing of a Penalty Notice i.e. a minimum of 10 school sessions (5 school days) in a block or accumulatively over a four month period, it is expected that the Head teacher will submit a request to the LA with accompanied relevant documentation as follows:

- A Certificate of Attendance evidencing the unauthorised leave of absence for the period In question signed by the Head teacher
- A Witness Statement written and signed by the Head teacher (or SLT)
- A copy of the leave of absence application form from parent(s)  
Including the reason for the request and the Head teacher's reply (if possible)

## What if the parent takes the leave of absence without prior written application?

The school must make clear in the Witness Statement when and how the information was established that a leave of absence had been taken without the permission of the school. It is recommended that contact is attempted with the parent during the leave and, if information has come to light that a holiday has been taken, parents should be challenged regarding the absence on their return. A request for leave of absence should not be granted retrospectively.

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## Absence Letters

Sickness - Mrs Magson also requires a written note for any day that your child is absent, with an accompanying explanation. This is to follow up the initial phone call.

Governors expect the Head Teacher to report on attendance at each governing body meeting.



## Slapped Cheek Syndrome

We have been made aware that there have been several suspected cases of this viral infection in our area and feel obliged to refer anyone concerned to the NHS website. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/slapped-cheek-syndrome>

*“Tell your midwife or GP if you're pregnant or have a weakened immune system and have been near someone with slapped cheek syndrome.”*