# Request: Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances

## Legislation

As of 1 September 2013 amendments were made to the School Attendance regulations 2006. These removed references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** (please see criteria below).

**Leave in Exceptional Circumstances**

* Service Personnel leaving / returning from active deployment (one or the other)
* Where inflexibility of the parents’ leave is part of the organisation 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 parents’ or child’s rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence would need to be provided.
* When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.
* A one-off never to be repeated occasion that can only take place at the time requested.

Headteachers have the discretion to grant leave, but they should only do so in exceptional circumstances. If a headteacher grants a leave request, it will be for them to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. This leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. Parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

**The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007**

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the [**Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/contents/made). These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

Taking leave during term time means that children miss important school time – both educationally and for other school activities. Before completing this application parents/carers are asked to consider the effect on their child’s continuity of education. Please ensure that your application fits one of the above criteria before applying and that you attach sufficient supporting documentary evidence if required/requested.

Please ensure you have read and understand the new regulations (**The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Amendment Regulations 2013** and **The** [**Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/contents/made)**)** which can be found at *www.****education****.gov.uk* before applying to take your child out of school during term time

## Leeming School Context and Evidencing Need

We are very aware that our school is in a unique context being based behind the wire, and that therefore, service issues will sometimes precipitate the need for exceptional leave of absence – such as visiting a new school before a posting, challenges relating to spousal deployment, living away from support networks etc. We wish to recognise these additional challenges, and make provision for them where possible, so are introducing a ‘service linked’ category for leave of absence requests (see form – please tick if the absence is specifically linked to the challenge of service life).

However, the mobility, change and disruption of service life (even pupils who, themselves, do not move, experience this all around them) makes good attendance even more important. Research has shown that service pupils generally experience more academic challenges around gaps in learning etc. than their peers, and therefore any further absence will exacerbate this.

For this reason, we will be requesting evidence be provided to support leave of absence requests of more than 2 days, or for repeated absences.

We will endeavour to continue to retain a pastoral understanding of the challenges that our families face when considering whether or not a request for Leave of Absence will be authorised, whilst also emphasising the vital importance of being in school to ensure the best educational provision for all pupils. If you have any questions, please contact the school directly and discuss these.

## Application Form: Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances

I am requesting exceptional leave of absence for the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name(s)** |  |
| **Class(es)** |  |
| **Dates:** | From: | To: |
| **Number of school days missed** |  |

### Reason

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Please tick** | **Service Linked?** | **Evidence required?** |
| 1. Service Personnel leaving / returning from active deployment |  | ✓ | Letter 1 (signed) |
| 2. Inflexibility of the parents’ leave is part of the organisation or company policy |  |  | Letter 2 (signed) |
| 3. Leave recommended as part of parents’ or child’s rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. |  |  | Clinician Letter |
| 4. When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis. |  |  | Details below. |
| 5. One off, never to be repeated occasion which can only take place at the time requested\* |  |  | Case by case. |

\* N.B. Category 5 refers to events with set dates, such as an immediate family wedding, medal ceremony etc. It does *not* cover: holidays linked to family get togethers, visits to family across the country, ‘once in a lifetime’ trips etc.

### Details (for any category)

Please provide details below. If additional evidence is required (see above), please obtain this as well.

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I certify that I have read and understood the regulations *(The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Amendment Regulations 2013* *and The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013)* and that the information provided above is true and accurate.

Signature of parent/carer………………………………….. Date………………..

### Review by Headteacher

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Authorised?**  |  |
| **Category /Reason / Notes** |  |
| **Signed** |  |

Parents will be notified of the outcome of this request via School Ping.

Office use only: [ ]  Response sent (ping) [ ]  Paperwork filed [ ]  Register updated

## Letter 1: Service Deployment (Category 1)

This should be completed by a line manager responsible for staffing (SNCO or above).

Dear Headteacher,

*Please tick:*

[ ]  I am writing to confirm that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is due to deploy / be away from home for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ months shortly.
OR:

[ ]  I am writing to confirm that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will be returning from a deployment / period away from home of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ months shortly.

Therefore, please consider granting a term time leave of absence for their child(ren), to enable them to spend valuable family time together linked to this period of deployment.

Best regards,

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## Letter 2: Inflexibility of Leave (Category 2)

This should be completed by a line manager responsible for staffing. If this is a service request, it should be completed by SNCO or above.

Dear Headteacher,

[ ]  I am writing to confirm that as a result of company / organisation policy, leave requests are inflexible. This means that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is unable to take leave during the school holidays at Christmas, Easter and Summer.

OR:

[ ]  I am writing to confirm that, due to specific inflexibility of leave arrangements, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is unable to take leave during the school holidays. I provide further details below:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Therefore, please consider granting a term time leave of absence for their child(ren), to enable them to spend valuable family time together.

Best regards,

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_