

Sheffield
Every School day matters!

enjoy • learn • achieve

sheffield.gov.uk/schoolmatters

SHEFFIELD LOCAL AUTHORITY

LEAVE IN TERM TIME GUIDANCE

AUGUST 2024

This guidance may be reviewed earlier than August 2025 in light of expected changes to Children Missing from Education processes. Changes expected are in relation to joint enquiries, intent to remove, and notification of removal.

Introduction

- 1.1 This policy document has been developed to ensure that Sheffield City Council provides a clear statement of intent, expectation and consistent guidance in relation to the management of ALL term time leave of pupils who attend a school in Sheffield. It has been produced to ensure all decisions are within the national legislation. Legally there is no entitlement for parents to take their child out of school during term time.
- 1.2 Parents can be fined for taking their children out of state funded school during term time without agreement from the school. There is no right of appeal to the fine being issued.
- 1.3 This policy also responds to the updated guidance issued from Department for Education (DfE) which states: -

Term time leave

[Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove 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.** Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

- 1.4 The Policy includes several guidance documents and templates to be used alongside this policy, to support schools in managing Leave in Term Time and Children Missing from Education.

2. Rationale

- 2.1 This guidance is provided for parents/carers, schools, and governing bodies, on the process affecting notifications for, and considering the authorisation of exceptional term time leave.
- 2.2 This guidance is provided for schools to manage and respond to situations where leave is not authorised or agreed and the procedures for the removal from school roll. This would include parents/carers who prevent their child from attending school regularly without a valid reason for the absence. Examples include parents/carers who regularly take the extended weekend (Monday or Friday), take advantage of last-minute deals, or repeated visits abroad.
- 2.3 There may be exceptional circumstances where leave in school term time may be granted. This would be decided by the headteacher on an individual basis for each notification. There is strong evidence from research to indicate that significant absence from school during term time can have a negative impact upon a child's attainment and learning.
- 2.4 All state funded schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case where one of their pupils reaches the national threshold for considering a penalty notice. Schools should not have a blanket position of issuing or not issuing penalty notices and should make judgements on each individual case to ensure fairness and consistency across the country.

3. Term time leave

Sheffield Local Authority recognises the important link between regular attendance at school and the educational attainment of children.

- 3.1 Action **may be taken** by Sheffield Local Authority against parents/carers who fail to ensure their child's regular attendance as irregular attendance could affect their child's level of attainment. The action may result in a Penalty Notice fine, or a court summons being issued.
- 3.2 Parents and carers who regularly take their child out of school in term time may be prosecuted via the magistrates' court.
- 3.3 Parents/carers are required to notify school of their intention to take leave in term time from the school at which their child is registered. If parents/carers do not submit a request for term time leave notification, school should ensure a letter (Appendix 9) is sent to the parent/carer to advise that the absence is not authorised, unless they are able to provide school with an appropriate reason for their child's absence.
- 3.4 Headteachers must operate a fair process when considering parent/carer reasons for exceptional leave in term time. Holidays, leisure or recreational activities should not be considered as exceptional circumstances. All requests for exceptional leave in term time must be considered on its merits as it is the headteacher whom makes these decisions. If leave is unauthorised a Penalty Notice must be sought. The impact upon the child's learning and well-being must be central to the decision made. The Headteacher may consider previous leave requests and other factors related to the child when making their decision.
- 3.5 Parents/carers who do not notify school of term time leave and take their child on 'unauthorised leave' or fail to keep the school informed of changes to leave arrangements, may receive a fine, be prosecuted and/or the children may lose their place at their school.

4. Notifications of term time leave in exceptional circumstances

- 4.1 Notifications for exceptional leave in term time or for a holiday should, where possible, be made prior to booking any leave, however, should be at least 20 school days in advance of any arrangement being made. This will allow sufficient time for the notification to be considered by the school. If no notification is submitted the head teacher is unable to authorise the leave retrospectively. The notification should be made in writing (letter or email) by the parent/carer using Appendix 1: Notification for Leave in term time or holiday form. One form per family per notification should be completed, unless siblings attend a different school, parents should inform each school.
- 4.2 Schools should plan to support parents/carers who have low literacy skills or for whom English is not their first language.
- 4.3 Term time leave notifications should include specific start and end dates, as this will formally constitute the leave period.
- 4.4 Parents/carers who are intending to travel abroad with their children during term time should not book travel prior to securing approval from the school.

- 4.5 Any changes to dates agreed by the school will require a re-submission for authorisation prior to departure.
- 4.6 **Parents/carers should ensure they have read schools term time leave policy.**
- 4.7 **The headteacher's decision is final.**

5. Family Emergency - where school have not been notified of leave

- 5.1 There will be some occasions where it has not been possible for the parent/carer to notify school of exceptional term time leave. Whilst emergency situations are often difficult, parents/carers are still required to contact the school at the earliest possible opportunity to inform of the absence and reasons for this.
- 5.2 Parents/carers taking their children out of school due to a family emergency are encouraged to consider:
- That they have considered the impact and appropriateness for their child
 - Whether or not alternative care arrangements could be made for the child to remain in school, e.g. stay with an extended family member
 - That they have looked at limiting the amount of time absent from school
 - If term time leave is for an extended period, parents/carer should consider admission at another local school whilst on term time leave
- 5.3 Where parents/carers have not notified school of leave, the child is at risk of losing their place at the current school in accordance with Section 8(h)¹. Parents may also receive a penalty fine.

6. Considering the exceptional term time leave notification

- 6.1 The school will consider all notifications for term time leave/holiday's in accordance with the current legislation and this guidance.
- 6.2 It is good practice for schools to meet or converse with parents/carers (wherever possible) to discuss any exceptional circumstances raised prior to making the decision.

The school will need to consider each notification for exceptional leave in term time on its own merits and whether there are exceptional circumstances for authorising the absence. Holidays, leisure or recreational activities should not be considered an exceptional circumstance.

¹ The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (2006)

7. The decision and informing the parent/carer by the school

- 7.1 The school will reach a decision and **may** inform parents of the outcome in **accordance with their own school policy**. If parents are not informed of the outcome, they should assume it has not been authorised.
- 7.2 Schools must ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to communicate the decision to families who have low levels of literacy or where English is not the first language.

A decision may result in the term time leave notification being (a) Authorised², (b) Unauthorised³ or (c) part Authorised and Unauthorised. For example, Mr X has requested 3 weeks term time leave for his child. The school acknowledges that the reason given is important but feels that 3 weeks is excessive and authorise 1 week's leave, with the remaining 2 weeks being unauthorised.

8. Unauthorised leave Penalty Notice Fine

- 8.1 If parents/carers choose to take their children out of school during term time for 5 or more consecutive school days (spanning over holiday periods, inset days or weekends would constitute consecutive school days, and this is not authorised by the School, the School are expected to request the Local Authority issue a Fixed Penalty Notice of £160 (if paid between 21 and 28 days) this is reduced to £80 (if paid within 21 days). Each parent/carer can be issued with a penalty notice, for each child, one per parent per child, issued separately.

For example: 2 parents/carers 2 children. Each parent/carer will be issued 2 fines, one for each child. The overall cost to each parent would be £320 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £160 if paid within 21 days for a **first offence**. For a **second offence** amount would be £320 as there will be no opportunity to pay at the reduced amount.

- 8.2 The responsibility for requesting Penalty Notice Fines is with the school and will be issued when requested by the headteacher.

The school should provide the paperwork for pupils identified and this should include:

- Original notification for exceptional leave in term time or holiday notification (appendix 1 form)
- Exceptional leave response in line with school policy
- Appendix 9 evidence letter (if notification not received)
- Up-to-date attendance certificate – showing unauthorised absence (G code)
- BLUE headteacher's certificate – covering holiday period

All requests (paperwork) for a Fixed Penalty notice must be emailed via anycomms and selecting Term Time Leave in the drop-down box to ensure it is sent to the correct recipient.

Any incorrect/late paperwork **will not** be returned, and penalty notices **will not** be issued

² Authorised- where the school has agreed that the leave is granted

³ Unauthorised- where the school does not agree that the leave request should be granted

9. Recording of Leave by the School

- 9.1 School attendance registers are legal documents and the information recorded in them can be used as evidence in legal proceedings. It is therefore important that the information contained is accurate and the correct absence code is used. All absences must be coded in accordance with Absence and Attendance Codes: Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities (Working Together to Improve School Attendance).
- If the Term Time Leave is unauthorised then G code should be recorded, and a penalty notice requested.
 - C code should be used if the leave is deemed to be an exceptional circumstance.
 - If part of the period is granted C code should be used for those dates, and the G code for the remaining dates.

CODE	Description	Category
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another code or description)	Authorised
G	Family Holiday/leisure or recreation (NOT Agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised
D	Dual registration i.e. pupil attending another establishment – indicates dual registration not attendance	Attending approved educational activity

- 9.2 Schools may use the code 'D' (dual registered) where they are able to demonstrate that a child will receive suitable education in another education establishment (in the UK or abroad) for a temporary basis. For example, a parent is required to travel abroad due to the nature of their work and they get their child registered at another school for the duration of their visit. The main school is required to ensure that it accurately monitors and records the attendance of the child at the dual registered base.
- 9.3 Mobile Child: Where the pupil is a mobile child, and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them a T code should be used in the register.

10. Process for removing a child's details from the school roll if they do not return following a period of Term Time Leave

- 10.1 A child's name can only be removed from school roll if one of the conditions prescribed in the Education (Pupil Registration Regulations) (England) 2006; Section 8(1) is satisfied.
- 10.2 Section 8(1)(f)⁴ would apply if the child has failed to attend school within 10 school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which leave was granted ('authorised absence'). Section 8(1)(h)⁵ would apply if the child had been continuously absent from school for a period not less than 20 school days and at no time was that period authorised by the school (unauthorised absence).

⁴ The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, Regulation 8(1)(f)

⁵ The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, Regulation 8(1)(h)

- 10.3 In **addition to the above 8(1) f/h**, the school and the Local Authority must **also** demonstrate that they have satisfied the following two conditions:
- That the headteacher does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the child is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause⁶; and
 - That both the headteacher and the Local Authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is⁷.
- 10.4 Schools must make joint enquiries with the Local Authority to establish if there are any other reasons for the absence (including school refusal, education neglect or school avoidance) when the child continues to reside at the same address but is not attending. This will include requests to CME team to complete joint enquiries.
- 10.5 If no other reasons for absence are established following the joint enquiries and the whereabouts of the child remain unknown, the Local Authority will agree to the school removing the child from roll after 20 school days.
- 10.6 The responsibility for the child transfers from the school to the Local Authority following de-registration where further safeguarding checks will be carried out including liaison with social care, HMRC, housing and benefits.
- 10.7 Legal action can still be pursued against a parent/carer following deregistration from a school. This is because the period of complaint would be taken from the time the child was on roll at the school.

11. Sheffield Local Authority and Schools process for dealing with unauthorised absence

- 11.1 When a headteacher does not authorise a leave request on legitimate grounds, it sends a clear message to the parent/carer that the school does not agree with the reasons provided by the parent/carer for the request for exceptional leave in term time or a holiday. If the parent/carer still takes their child on leave in school term time the following may apply:
- Issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice
 - Prosecution for the original offence of failing to secure regular school attendance
- 11.2 If Parents/Carers are found guilty of an offence, when prosecuted by magistrate's court, they can be sentenced to a fine, or a community penalty.

⁶ Unavoidable is defined as 'something beyond the control of the individual'. Not being able to get return tickets to the UK because of poor planning would not normally be considered unavoidable.

⁷ In order to 'ascertain where the pupil is' a school must be able to confirm an exact address (e.g. house number or name, street, area, and country). Simply being told that the child is 'still in America' would not count as ascertaining where the pupil is.

12. Communicating the policy to Parents/Carers

12.1 Term time leave policy should be communicated to parents/carers regularly. It is considered good practice for schools to:

- Refer to the policy in the school's attendance and behaviour policy.
- Promote the policy on the attendance board and in the school newsletter.
- Provide a leaflet on leave during term time for parents/carers of key points. The leaflet may be translated into community languages where possible.
- Promote the policy at parents' evening and school events for new starters.
- Make reference to the policy in home/school agreements.

13. Return to the UK, where a child does not have a school place

13.1 If a child and their family return to the UK the parent/carer will need to re-apply for a school place. Parents/carers requiring a school place must contact the Children Missing Education (CME) team on 0114 273 6462.

13.2 The CME team can provide support to parents/carers to secure school places and other forms of education provision.

Notification of Term Time Leave (one form per family)

Before completing this form, please ensure you have understood school's policy for term time leave

Name of Pupils at this school: Sibling in other schools: <small>(name, dob, name of school)</small> Current address:	<small>(please ensure school have correct details for all parents/carers)</small> Name of Parent/Carer 1: D.o.b: Name of Parent/Carer 2: D.o.b: Address of parent 2 if different to that on the left:	
Dates of leave: From To		
What is the notification for? Exceptional leave during term time: yes/no <small>(if yes please attach additional information/evidence to support your circumstances)</small> Holiday in term time: yes /no		
Where will you be staying/visiting during the leave period? <small>If staying with friends/relatives, please provide the full address and Emergency Contact Details (UK and Abroad). If taking a holiday, please provide the region and country of travel.</small> UK: Abroad:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I confirm that the information on this form is true • I agree to keep the school informed of any changes to my travel arrangements or if my child is unable to return to school on to due date • I am aware that if my child does not return to school by the date provided that he/she is at risk of losing their place at this school • <b style="color: red;">I am aware that I will be fined and/or prosecuted for any time which my child is absent from school that has not been authorised by the headteacher. 		
Signed by parent/carer:	Print name & relationship to child:	Date:
For school use only	Date request received / /	
Has the notification been considered by the headteacher? Y/N Has the notification been discussed with the parent/carer? Y/N Date:		
No of days Authorised No of days Unauthorised		
Date of decision letter sent to parent/carer (only if leave is to be granted):		
<small>If unauthorised leave is taken this case complies with Penalty Notice criteria, please forward to Attendance Legal Team via Anycomm's along with HTC, Pupil/student attendance register.</small>		
Name of school:	Headteacher's signature:	Date:

School Decision Letter (template)

SCHOOL NAME:

Date:

Name:

Address:

Reference:

To the Parent/Carer of

On the (date) you requested that the school consider exceptional leave in term time/holiday in term time for your child(ren) (name, DOB). You said that you wanted to go to (place) for (reason). You said that you would be away from school from (date) to(date). This equates to school days

The Head teacher has considered your request and has reached the following decision:

School days will be **agreed** by the school

School days will **not be agreed** by the school

The reasons for the headteacher's decision are given below.

We expect your child to return to school on (date). If your child is unable to return on this date please let us know, as failure to do so may result in your child losing their place at this school. This will mean you will have to re-apply for a place at this school. You may also risk being fined or prosecuted by Sheffield City Council if your child is absent from school without the headteacher's permission.

Signed on behalf of the School:

Printed Name:

School letter to parent, informing parent/carer of possible risk of losing school place (template)

NAME OF SCHOOL:

Date:

Name:

Address:

Reference:

To the Parent/Carer of

Your child was due to return to school on(date). We have made enquiries and have been unable to confirm that your child is absent because of sickness or any other unavoidable circumstances.

As we are unable to confirm where your child is or a return date, I am writing to let you know that I will be requesting that your child is removed from the school roll. I will be informing the Children Missing from Education Team who may make enquiries with the Police, Social Care and Child Benefits.

It is important that you contact (name) the School (telephone number) as soon as you receive this letter. I will continue to make enquiries to find out where your child is.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Cc: CME Team, Floor 5, Howden House, Sheffield City Council

School letter to parent informing them of loss of school place (template)

NAME OF SCHOOL:

Date:

Name:

Address:

Reference:

To the Parent/Carer of

I am writing to let you know that (child's name) has been removed from the register of this school on (date). If you would like your child to attend this school you will have to re-apply for a place.

Please contact the Children Missing Education (CME) team on 0114 273 6462, who will be able to help you find a school place.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Cc: CME Team, Floor 5, Howden House, Sheffield City Council

Appendix 5

School Checklist to Locate Missing/Lost Pupils

Please complete fully and include 'no response' where appropriate, as this form will be required if a Child Protection investigation is undertaken

Name of Child:

DOB:

School:

School Action	Details	Outcome including date completed
Telephone calls made to parent/carers	Mobile: Landline:	
Telephone calls to emergency contact numbers	Name & telephone number:	
Email to parent	Email address:	
Letters sent to last known address		
Enquiries made with school which siblings attend	Sibling name & School	
Has the child has moved to another part of the UK and address is known, please contact CME team (0114 2736462) and request 'safe and well visit'	Date requested:	Date response received: Outcome:
Enquiries made with agencies with known involvement		
Home visited completed (Min of 3 non-contact visits to be made). Schools may request this from their local MAST team		
Enquiry made with neighbours		
Any other enquiries undertaken		

All completed checklists need to be accompanied with a 'Request to Remove Child from School Roll' and sent to the CME team to enable deregistration to occur
CME Team, Floor 5, Howden House, Sheffield City Council

Request To Remove Child From School Roll

Information provided may be shared with fellow professionals under Schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act 1998



Details of Pupil to be removed?

First name		Surname	
Date of birth		UPN	
Current Address		GP name & address	
Brief description of why you feel this child should be removed?			
Do you have any concerns or worries about this child's safety or believe this child is at risk of significant or immediate harm? Please explain:			
Have you informed anyone about your concerns or worries, If so who?			
Where do you think this child is now living?			
Is a current FCAF Available? YES / NO			
Date of last attendance at school?			
Who else is involved with the child or family? Name, Agency, contact details			

Details of Family members

Name of siblings	DOB	School attending
Parent/carer name & DOB		
Details of Emergency contacts		

I believe that the child is missing and cannot be found after making reasonable enquires. I am therefore requesting that the child, (insert name) is removed from the school roll.

Signed school:

Date:

Return the above to: Children Missing from Education Team, Floor 5, Howden House, Sheffield City Council Tel: 0114 273 6462. You will receive a confirmation letter relating to the request of deregistration within 10 school days

**Exceptional Leave/Holiday in Term Time
Request for issue of a Penalty Notice**



Inclusion & Attendance Service, Education & Skills

Submit Via Anycomms

Name of Child:	Date of Birth:
Address:	Siblings (School/DoB):
Postcode:	

Name of each person who has day to day care of the child and you would like to request a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued (ensure correct details are provided)

NB: these will be the individuals who will receive a fine (if separated request on who is taking child)

First Name	Surname	Relationship to Child	Date of Birth	Address if different from above

School Name:	School Address and contact number:
Referrer Name:	
Name of Headteacher:	
Date:	

Any comments in addition to appendix 9 letter:

Week Beginning to week ending of Leave Date From: Date To:
(Note: 10 sessions per week)

Please ensure the following relevant documents are attached otherwise requests will be rejected:

- Headteacher's Certificate
- Pupil registration Certificate
- Original notification for leave (appendix 1 form)
- Exceptional leave response (if leave granted)
- Appendix 9 evidence letter (if notification not received)

Office Use ONLY:

Child ONE ID:

Practice Guidance for Schools
Unauthorised leave of absence in term time

Why should we do it?

1. To improve attendance and attainment
2. Government guidance from September 2013
3. Shows level of importance schools place on the education they are providing. Does it matter if a child is missing for a week or two?
4. Should provide consistent approach for families as all schools should be working to guidelines, otherwise they risk undermining colleagues in other schools and promoting discontent between families and friends.

What school should do?

1. Constantly advertise (use school website or newsletters) that Unauthorised Leave of Absence in Term-time is not appropriate and ensure parents clearly understand what to expect if they choose to take leave.
2. Ensure the response to ALL parents is consistent and clear
3. Ensure process and policy is in place as this could result in legal proceedings which may have serious implications for parents
4. Ensure information given to school and parent is current and correct

School process should include;

Exceptional Leave of Absence in Term time/ Holiday in term time notification form which allows parent/carer to give details for leave, this should be completed at least 20 school days in advance, of leave being taken. **Leave cannot be granted retrospectively.** This form must have a paragraph which states the parent/carer maybe at risk of receiving a fine.

Meeting/conversing with parent/carers where possible

Response to parents/carers if authorised due to exceptional circumstances as per policy
Decision to allow Exceptional Circumstances should only be made by the headteacher,
most notifications for Leave of Absence in term time should be forwarded via anycomms
Attendance Legal Team for a Penalty Fine.

Before sending to Inclusion and Attendance, check...

1. Pupil is statutory school age (term after 5th birthday) – *a child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between 1st January and 31st March they are of compulsory school age on 31st March; if they turn 5 between 1st April and 31st August they are of compulsory school age on 31st August. If they turn 5 between 1st September and 31st December, then they are of compulsory school age on 31st December.*
A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach sixteen.
2. Check if period of leave is 5 or more consecutive school days. If taken either side of a weekend of holiday it would be added together.
3. Check paperwork is complete and correct
4. Ensure you are clear on who you are requesting fines to be issued to
5. Check parent/carer details are correct

Paperwork for Inclusion and Attendance Team should include:

A- Completed term time leave Penalty Notice Request.

Please complete only one form per family, include all children in the family. Ensure the details are correct and up-to-date. It **must** include the full names of persons to be fined.

Highlight which items of documentation are being submitted with the request

B- School Notification Form (where leave requested)

This document should be the one provided by the Local Authority for consistency across the city. Requests for penalty notices will only be processed if submitted on this form.

Please ensure details on the form are correct and complete with names of any siblings at other school and full names and Date of Birth (if school have this) of parent/carers to be fined (Mr and Mrs Brown is not acceptable)

Check if parents are both living at the address you have on your system.

Where parents are separated or divorced it is advisable to fine the parent who is taking or allowing the child to be taken away.

Where there are two parents in the family living at the same address, both should be fined.

Where a parent has a partner who lives with the family and has taken time away with them, they should be fined as they are accepting day-to-day care.

C- Schools' Response to Parents Request.

See Sheffield City Council's codes of conduct for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices 7.2 School should state in their policy how they will respond to parents. **The Local Authority suggest that within a school's policy it states that parents will only receive a response if the leave is granted.**

D- Pupil Registration Certificate

This must show that on the dates of the requested leave the pupil was coded with a 'G' in the register. Where leave was not requested but school can evidence that unauthorised leave was taken 'G' should be entered into the register and the supporting evidence provided with the request for a Penalty Fine

Where a pupil is returning to school mid-week please ensure you complete the full week attendance before printing the registration certificate, you must show the pupil has returned.

Please send a registration certificate with the pupil address on as this allows for further checks to be made before issue of the penalty fine.

Advice: when the registration certificate is printed off if you highlight the weeks for leave taken this will help when completing the headteacher's certificate.

E- Headteacher's certificate

This is a **Legal Document** which is presented in court should the fine remain unpaid.

Care should be taken when completing the certificate

The certificate should be printed on pale blue paper to aid identification

The certificate can only be signed by the headteacher of the school

The certificate should show the attendance of the pupil for the complete weeks,

(week beginning (Monday) to week ending (Friday) in which the leave was taken. *e.g. between*

the dates 06.10.14 – 17.10.14 if leave begins on Wednesday 9th Oct and ends on the following Wed 15th Oct, two weeks should have been affected, the certificate should show this.

Please note: 1 day = 2 sessions 1 week = 10 sessions

Week beginning	06.10.14	13.10.14				
Attendances possible	10	10				
Attendances actual	4	4				

Total attendances possible = 20
 Total attendances actual = 8
 Total absences 12 all are unauthorised

F- Evidence to prove leave taken (if request not received)

This maybe a transcript of a telephone conversation with a parent signed and dated by the person who had the conversation.

Transcript of discussion in school with a parent or pupil signed and dated by the person who had the discussion.

Evidence of a home visit by a member of school staff, where information may have been collected

If school have reason to believe a child has been away but no request submitted or evidence gathered to confirm this is the case, school should use the template letter (appendix 9) provided by the Local Authority which gives parents chance to provide evidence of absence

Advice: if a parent refuses to pay a fine and is taken to court, the onus is on the parent to prove where the child was and why there were unable to attend school.

Time limits affecting the process

All requests for ‘Leave in Term Time – Request for issue of a Penalty Notice’ should be sent via anycomms to Attendance Legal Team within 30 days of the pupil’s return to school, with the exception of leave requested for the end of an academic year.

Common Errors on Requests

- Address on school system not updated to central system (Data transfer not activated or working?)
- Parents’ first names missing or parents names incorrect
- Fine only requested for Mum but requests states only time dad can take. Should be requesting for both parents
- School’s information not up-to-date with status of parents
- Headteachers certificates not filled in correctly

Appendix 9
Template Letter to parent (no request for leave made to school)

School's logo

Parent name and address

Dear parent/carer(s) of

RE: Child/ren's name

We have reason to believe that you have taken your child/ren out of school without agreement of the head teacher during the period to

Please could you provide evidence of the reasons for absence to school by, failure to do so may result in school referring the information to the Local Authority for a penalty notice to be issued for unauthorised leave in term time.