2018

Dear Mrs Fuming

I am writing in response to your letter dated 2nd December 2014. I recognise the sincerity in your letter and that you feel the circumstances leading up to the unauthorised leave of absence were exceptional.

As you say, is left to the heads discretion whether term time leave is authorised. We do not as a cluster or a school publish what we consider ‘exceptional circumstances’ as there could be far too many variations and interpretations. Therefore school and cluster’s attendance policy is that we do not authorise any term time leave.

I discuss the issue of attendance and our approach fully and openly with governors without identifying individual families. Whilst families, quite understandably, view their circumstances from a personal viewpoint, as a head teacher I have an over arching responsibility for improving attendance across the whole school. This is directed from central government and we have indication that the thresholds for managing attendance are going to become even more challenging. I hope you understand that many individual families would feel that their circumstances were exceptional. This leaves head teachers to have to make highly subjective judgements about each case. Cluster heads and our governing body feel this is inappropriate as it could have a very negative impact on the school’s overall attendance and indeed, relationships. Therefore it would be very, very unusual for any term time leave to be authorised.

So unfortunately the absence will remain unauthorised and I hope this letter has clarified the very difficult position schools are in. I do, however, understand and empathise with your personal perspective and know this will not be the response you were hoping for. I hope that we are able to move on from this as I feel you have always had a good relationship with the school. If you would like to meet to clarify anything in this letter or if I haven’t explained the rationale very clearly please do not hesitate to come and speak to me about. I would ask that this is done in a calm way.

The offer to move on is genuine and I don’t in anyway wish for you feel uncomfortable in your informal interactions with me in and around school.

Kind regards,

Mrs Binks Neate-Evans

Head teacher