Appendix 2

Guidance Notes for Parents requesting Leave in Term Time

1. Parents wishing the school to consider granting leave in term time should read these notes carefully and then complete and send the request form below to the Headteacher. This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered **before** the desired period of absence. (Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any planned absence before receiving the school’s decision regarding their request). In any event the request form must be received by the school at least four weeks before the leave in term time requested dates to allow sufficient time for appropriate consideration.
2. The granting of leave of absence in term time is, by law, a matter for consideration and decision by the Headteacher. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time. The Department for Education (DfE) Guidance ‘*Working Together to Improve School Attendance (Feb 2024)’* states that: *Generally, the DfE does not consider the need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance*. Telford & Wrekin Local Authority (LA) policy supports that view. Where such requests are made, the Headteacher should decide if there are **exceptional** **circumstances** before the leave is granted, if the leave is granted the Headteacher has the discretion to agree the duration of that leave.
3. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents therefore, need to consider very carefully before making any request for leave in term time, the demands of the National and wider School Curriculum especially at the Key Stage assessment stage. In considering a request, the school may also take account of: -
* the **exceptional** circumstances stated that have given rise to the request;
* whether the child is compulsory school age;
* the stage of the child’s education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements;
* whether the same trip could be taken during the 13 weeks school is closed to pupils?
* students/pupils on examination courses or due to take SATS will **not** normally be granted leave of absence.
1. Where parents have children in more than one school, a separate request must be made to each school. The Headteacher of each school will make their own decision based on the factors relating to the child at their school. However, there is an expectation that all schools involved will communicate and all agree a decision whether to authorise or not. It is hoped that if this situation arises parents will be persuaded to accept the reasons for refusal given and, thereby, withdraw any leave requests.

5. Where requests for a grant of leave in term time are received from only one parent the response letter – agreeing or refusing – will be either addressed to both/all parents where they live at the same address or to each where they do not. This is to ensure, particularly in the case of a refusal, that both or all parents are fully aware of the consequences of ignoring a refusal as the refusal letter clearly states that each parent may receive a penalty notice.

6. Should the school decide to grant the leave. but the child **does not return to school at the time s/he was expected to** (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave in term time period) and, no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence or, make known the whereabouts of the child, **his/her place at the school could be lost.**

7. Should the School decide **not to grant the leave** and parents still take their child out of school the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** which may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine of £160 per parent per child. This Penalty Notice fine will be reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days. Failure to pay the £160 fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to Court proceedings, which could ultimately result in a fine of up to £2500 and/or imprisonment of up to three months.

**Request for Leave during Term Time**

Date……………………..........

To: The Headteacher of:………………………..…………………………………………………………….(School)

I request permission for leave in term time from school for my child:

(full name) …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

from (date) ..……………….…..… to (date) ……………………...... for …….. school days.

My child will be accompanied during the leave by:

(parent/carer) …………………………………..… and (parent/carer)…..………………………………………

The **exceptional circumstances** and reason for this request are: -

(If necessary, please continue on a separate sheet and attach it to this form)

I have (an)other child(ren) in (an)other school(s) as follows

Child(ren) (full name(s) ……………………………………. School(s) ......…………………………............

………………………………………………………………… ……….……………………........................

.......................................................................................... ………......................................................

**Name of 1st Parent/Carer(s)** ……………………………… Signed ……......................................................

Current address………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Mobile No:…………………………………………………..

**Name of 2nd Parent/Carer(s)** ……………………………….. Signed …................................................

Current address…………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Mobile No:…………………………………………………..

**Please return the completed form to the school office. The school will write to you and inform you of the decision on whether your request is authorised or not. Please do not confirm any holiday booking until you have confirmation of permission for the leave in term time from the Headteacher.**

**For Office Use Only**

Date request for leave in term time received by school ………………………………………………………..……

Current Attendance………………% Last Year’s Attendance…………………..…..…%

Number of unauthorised absence sessions during previous 10 school weeks …………………………………

Re: **Siblings:** other schools confirmed? ...........................................................................................................

What action are other schools taking? ..............................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................................................

**Leave in term time Agreed/Not Agreed**

Request for leave is **agreed/is not agreed** for the above pupil to take leave during term time between the above dates.

Signed ……………………………………………………... Job Title………………………………………….………

Print Name ………………………………………………… Date …………………………………………..….…

Notification of decision: Date letter sent to parent .............................................................................................

Any notes:

**School Letter (sample) Leave in Term Time Not Agreed**

(Parents name and address)

Date

Dear (Parents name)

(Child’s Name and Date of Birth)

Thank you for your letter/form dated (date) requesting permission for (pupil’s name) to be absent from school for (number of sessions), between (dates).

As you may be aware the government has published a national framework for Penalty Notices and has renewed appeals to parents not to take their children out of school during term time. The Governors of the school support this and agree that students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances. Having looked at your application, although understanding of your reasons, I do not feel that your request can be supported in this instance because …………………….………………………… …………………………………………………………………………………………………………… Therefore, if the absence occurs the dates will be unauthorised.

As a school we are asked to inform you that, in line with both the Department for Education and Telford and Wrekin Council Policy, 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within 10 school rolling weeks may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine of £160 payable per parent, per child, which can be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days, but only if it is the first Penalty Notice issued to you from 1st September 2024. If this fine is not paid within 28 days this may lead to Court proceedings which could ultimately result in a criminal record and a fine of up to £2500 and/or an alternative sentence which can include up to three months imprisonment.

If this absence results in a second Penalty Notice issued to you within three years of the date of the first one, (from 1st September 2024) a flat rate of £160 will apply. A third Penalty Notice will not be issued within a three year rolling period. Therefore, alternative action or legal measures will be utilised when the criteria of 10 sessions of unauthorised absences in a 10 school week rolling period are met.

Our key priority is to ensure that (pupil’s name) is as successful as possible and can achieve (his/her) full potential. I would hope that, upon reflection you are able to support this decision in line with the government and local authority policy that leave should be restricted to the 13 weeks school holidays except in exceptional circumstances.

I have attached a copy of (pupil’s name) attendance for this academic year.

***The Headteacher has been fully consulted in relation to this request for leave and fully supports the decision made.***

Thank you for your understanding; I hope this letter explains the decision that has been made.

Yours sincerely

(Name)

**(Job Title)**

**School letter sample when leave in term time has not been requested**

(Both) Parents name and address

Date:

Dear (both parents names)

Re: (Child’s name & date of birth)

Thank you for advising us you were on holiday with (pupil’s name) and s/he would be absent until the ??/??/?? **or** School are aware that you have taken (pupil’s name) on holiday and no request for the leave during term time was made. Therefore, the leave will be recorded as unauthorised.

As you may be aware the government has published a national framework for Penalty Notices and has renewed appeals to parents not to take their children out of school during term time. The Governors of this school support this and agree that students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances. On this occasion, as school have not received a request for absence, the associated legislation does not allow for retrospective permission to be granted, therefore, the absence during (the dates) will be unauthorised.

As a school we are asked to inform you that, in line with both the Department for Education and Telford and Wrekin Council Policy, 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within 10 school rolling weeks may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine of £160 payable per parent, per child, which can be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days, but only if it is the first Penalty Notice issued to you from 1st September 2024. If this fine is not paid within 28 days this may lead to Court proceedings which could ultimately result in a criminal record and a fine of up to £2500 and/or an alternative sentence which can include up to three months imprisonment.

If this absence results in a second Penalty Notice issued to you within three years of the date of the first one, (from 1st September 2024) a flat rate of £160 will apply. A third Penalty Notice will not be issued within a three-year rolling period. Therefore, alternative action or legal measures will be utilised when the criteria of 10 sessions of unauthorised absences in a 10 school week rolling period are met.

Our key priority is to ensure that (pupil’s name) is as successful as possible and can achieve his/her full potential. I would hope that upon reflection you are able to support this decision in line with the government and local authority policy that leave should be restricted to the 13 weeks school holidays except in exceptional circumstances.

I have attached a copy of (pupil’s name) attendance for this academic year.

Thank you for your understanding; I hope this letter explains the decision that has been made.

Yours sincerely

**(Name)**

**(Job title)**

**School Letter Leave Agreed**

(Parents name and address)

Date

Dear (Parents name)

(Child’s Name and Date of Birth)

Thank you for your referral form/letter dated (date) requesting permission for (pupil’s name) to be absent from school for (number of days), between (dates).

As you may be aware the government has published a national framework for Penalty Notices and has renewed appeals to parents not to take their children out of school during term time. The Governors of this school support this and agree that students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances.

Having looked at your request for leave in term time, I feel that on this occasion your request can be supported. **Therefore, the absence to include the dates requested will be authorised.**

Our key priority is to ensure that (pupil’s name) is as successful as possible and can achieve (his/her) full potential. I would hope that, in the future you are able to support this decision in line with the Government and Local Authority policy, that leave should be restricted to the 13 weeks school holidays except in exceptional circumstances.

I have attached a copy of (pupil’s name) attendance for this academic year.

***The Headteacher has been fully consulted in relation to this request for leave and fully supports the decision made.***

I hope this letter explains the reason for the decision that has been made.

Yours sincerely

(Name)

**(Job Title)**