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.

4. 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 **Lightmoor Village Primary 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? .....

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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