

**Bredenbury Primary School**  
**TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**  
**February 2014**

**Signed and dated: Chair of Governors**

**Headteacher**

***Attending school regularly, greatly improves your child's chance of fulfilling their potential and being successful in school.***

## **INTRODUCTION**

**This policy replaces the Holiday in Term Time Policy.**

From 1 September 2013, amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 came in force. These amendments state that Headteacher's **may not** grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Parents do not have the automatic right to take their child out of school. Parents wishing to do so should be discouraged due to the adverse effect this can have on a child's academic progress and achievement.

Governors are reluctant to automatically refuse all requests for term-time holidays, but do feel that parents should be aware of the implications of taking children out of lessons and the increased powers available to the school through the Local Authority.

New Policy written in:	February 2014
Consultation with Governors in :	February 2014
Consultation with Parents in:	February 2014
Ratified by Governors on:	13 <sup>th</sup> February 2014
To be reviewed by Governors :	When new legislation requires

**Bredenbury Primary School**  
**TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**  
**February 2014**

*There are 190 statutory school days per Academic Year. This means that there are 175 other days which parents can use to take leave without affecting their child's education.*

**AIMS**

- We believe that good attendance is essential if children are to take full advantage of school and gain the educational and social skills, which will equip them for life.
- Bredenbury aims to achieve good attendance by operating a Term Time Leave of Absence Policy.
- We will monitor absence and work quickly to solve any identified problems.
- **Good attendance is seen as an achievement in its own right.**
- It is important to remember that only the school can approve absence – within the constraints of the law – not the parents.
- The Term Time Leave of Absence Policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all, as outlined in the School's Equality policy.

**SAFEGUARDING**

Bredenbury Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers and staff. The care and safety of the individual is the key issue behind this document.

**UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE:**

- Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.
- Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

**Bredenbury Primary School**  
**TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**  
**February 2014**

- Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- ☐ Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- ☐ Truancy before or during the school day;
- ☐ Absences which have never been properly explained;
- ☐ Children who arrive at school too late to get an attendance mark;
- ☐ Shopping, children looking after other children or birthdays;
- ☐ Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

**REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME**

**When deciding whether to allow time off, the school will consider:**

- If there are **exceptional circumstances** for the request.
- The time of year you want your child to be out of school.
- How long the absence will be and how much it will disrupt your child's education.
- Previous similar requests.
- Your child's attendance record.

We will take into account the Government Guidance when considering what the **exceptional circumstances** are.

**Bredenbury Primary School**  
**TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**  
**February 2014**

**Holiday requests for the following reasons are not considered to be special circumstances.**

- Availability of cheap holidays.
- Poor weather experienced in the school holiday periods.
- Holidays overlapping with the beginning and end of term.

**Authorisation will not be given in the following circumstances:**

- Pupil's attendance is less than 95% attendance in the current academic year.
- Pupil's attendance was less than 95% attendance in the previous year.
- In SAT's year – Year 2 and Year 6.
- At the beginning of the Academic Year.
- Retrospectively.
- If there are other attendance concerns such as poor punctuality.
- Religious events other than those exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Where necessary the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set apart the day for religious observance.
- Poor weather conditions at certain times.
- Alternative travel arrangements not being fully utilised, resulting in a delay in returning to school.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE AUTHORISED BY THE SCHOOL**

**Neither the Headteacher nor the Chair of Governors will grant leave of absence unless in exceptional circumstances.**

- **The application must made in advance** and the headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which will warrant the leave.
- Where a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school.

**Bredenbury Primary School**  
**TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**  
**February 2014**

- A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's and Chair of Governor's discretion.
- Please complete the Term Time Leave of Absence Form and return it to the Headteacher as far in advance as you can.
- The Term Time Leave Of Absence Form can be found at the end of this policy. You can also get a copy of The Term Time Leave of Absence Form from the office.

**Examples of exceptional circumstances**

The following are examples of **exceptional circumstances** where school **may** consider authorising term time leave (but are not obliged to do so).

- Close family member bereavement (up to 3 days).
- Immediate family member wedding (up to 5 days, if travelling abroad is involved).
- Immediate family member funeral (up to 3 days).
- Religious observance.
- Proven parental employment holiday restrictions.
- Unavoidable delay in travel arrangements due to adverse weather conditions.
- Unavoidable delay in travel due to being deemed unfit to travel by medical practitioner, with proof provided to the school for the period of absence.

**If a parent does not agree to the decision of the Head Teacher then they can ask the Chair of Governors to review it. The final decision rests with the Chair of Governors.**

**If unknown absence occurs the school will inform the education Welfare Officer (EWO) and complete a Children Missing Education (CME) form.**

**Bredenbury Primary School**  
**TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**  
**February 2014**

**PENALTY NOTICES**

When term time leave of 5 days or more is unauthorised by the school, a Penalty Note will be issued by the Local Authority. Penalty Notices are issued per parent, per child, as appropriate. All parents who receive a Penalty Notice are required to pay their individual Penalty Notice. Unpaid Penalty Notices will be progressed to the Magistrates Court for their consideration.

**PARENTS SHOULD NOTE:** The Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice (starting at £60 per parent/per child if paid within 28 days rising to £1200 if paid between 29 and 42 days) if the term time leave is unauthorised and is in excess of 5 school days. Your child may be removed from roll if they are absent for 20 consecutive school days without authorisation or do not return after 10 days once the agreed leave has expired.

**PARENTS SHOULD ALSO NOTE:** that although a penalty notice is not a criminal conviction, it does go on a police record and would appear, if relevant, on an enhanced DBS (formally CRB) check. Should the matter proceed to the Magistrates Court and the Magistrates find in favour of the Local Authority, it will result in a criminal conviction against appellant, who has not paid the notice, or both parents if neither has paid, as well as incurring substantial court costs.

**WHAT THE SCHOOL WILL DO:**

Only the Headteacher can authorise term time leave and s/he will consider cases on an individual basis. If necessary, advice from the Chair of Governors will be sought. In this case, the final decision will be made by the Chair of Governors.

**The Headteacher and Chair of Governors will follow the guidelines below:**

- If parents are taking a child abroad, for an exceptional reason, the school must have sight of the booking arrangements in order to confirm dates and flight details, prior to authorising any leave.

**Bredenbury Primary School**  
**TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**  
**February 2014**

- Medical certificates should not automatically be accepted. Dates will need to be checked and a translator may be required to clarify details of a medical certificate, i.e. the medical condition and whether this prevented the child from travelling and/or returning to school.
- If the original leave **has not been authorised** and the child and/or parent becomes unwell, the leave is to remain unauthorised despite any medical certificate being provided.
- The school will inform parents/carers in writing of their decision and will retain a copy of their reply along with a copy of the original request – and travel/booking details.
- Only in **very exceptional** circumstances should a pupil be granted more than 10 days school leave of absence in any school year.

**Parents please note:**

- If a pupil incurs 20 consecutive days of unauthorised term-time absence the pupil may be removed from the School Roll\*.
- If leave has been authorised, but the pupil then fails to return to school within 10 days immediately following this time, the pupil may be deleted from School Roll\*\*.
- The parent will be informed of this action (having previously been made aware of the possibility) and that they (the parent) will be required to apply for a new school place via the Admissions Service.

\* and \*\* If unknown absence occurs the school should inform their Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and must complete a Children Missing Education (CME) Form.

Prior to removing the pupil from roll the school and Local Authority will have to have made reasonable enquiries as to the pupils whereabouts, to try to ascertain if there are reasonable grounds for the child not to be in school – following The Education (Pupil Registration (England) Regulations 2006).

**CATEGORISING ABSENCE**

- Leave of absence for medical/dental appointments will be authorised.

**Bredenbury Primary School**  
**TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**  
**February 2014**

- Pupils may be allowed up to 10 days annual holiday, in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.
- Sitting external examinations e.g. music exams will be authorised.
- Absence off-site for special tuition may be authorised.
- Fixed period or permanent exclusions will be authorised.

**The Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) is responsible for:**

- Checking the official register, looking for patterns of absence and lateness, together with any concerns raised by members of staff.
- Writing letters or making home visits where necessary and reporting to the school on findings and any further actions to be taken.

**The Chair of Governors will:**

- Monitor attendance/absence by liaising with the Headteacher.
- Report back to the Governing Body where necessary.

**SUCCESS CRITERIA**

- We are meeting our attendance targets.
- We have positive feedback from outside agencies such as Ofsted and the Educational Welfare Officer etc.
- Everybody is clear about what to do if a child is absent from school.

**Bredenbury Primary School**  
**TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**  
**February 2014**

**Term Time Leave of Absence Request Form**

Dear parent/carer,

Thank you for your request for term time leave of absence for your child. Please ensure you have read the school Term Time Leave of Absence Policy.

The Head Teacher will only consider authorising up to 10 days of term time leave for **exceptional circumstances** if the following criteria are met.

1. At least 95% attendance over the previous academic year.
2. At least 95% attendance in the current academic year.
3. Child not in public examination year (SAT's in Year 2 and year 6).
4. Leave not for the beginning of any academic year.
5. The request for the leave is not being made retrospectively.
6. There are no other attendance concerns, such as poor attendance.

**Examples of non-exceptional circumstances:**

The following examples are not reasons to authorise term-time leave:

- Going on holiday.
- Preference of holiday dates availability of cheap holidays and accommodation.
- Overlap with beginning or end of term.
- Relatives getting married overseas.
- Religious events (for religious observations please refer to the religious observance guidance).
- Poor weather conditions during the school holidays.
- Alternative travel arrangements not being fully utilised, resulting in a delay returning to school.

**Examples of exceptional circumstances:**

The following are examples of exceptional circumstances where a school **may** consider authorising term-time leave but are not obliged to. The final decision rests with the school.

- Close family member bereavement (up to 3 days).
- Immediate family member wedding (up to 5 days, if travelling abroad is involved).
- Immediate family member funeral (up to 3 days).
- Proven parental employment holiday restrictions.
- Unavoidable delay in travel arrangements due to adverse weather conditions.
- Unavoidable delay in travel due to being deemed unfit to travel by medical practitioner, with proof provided to the school for the period of absence.

**Agreed by School Governors February 2014**

**Bredenbury Primary School**  
**TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**  
**February 2014**

Name of child .....

Class .....

**Dates for which Term Time Leave of Absence is required:**

From ..... To .....

Return to school on ..... Total number of school days .....

\*Please provide a copy of your provisional/proposed booking to confirm the dates of your leave request.

Reasons for Term Time Leave of Absence request .....

.....

**If you have children at other schools a request for leave of absence must be made to each school for their consideration.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Local Authority will issue a Penalty Notice (starting at £60 per parent/per child if paid within 28 days, rising to £120 per parent/per child if paid between 29 and 42 days) if the term time leave is unauthorised and is in excess of 5 school days. Your child will be removed from roll if they are absent for 20 consecutive school days without authorisation or do not return after 10 days once the agreed leave has expired.

Signature of Parent/Carer..... Date .....

---

**FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY**

Current attendance ..... Previous year's attendance .....

(Both must be at least 95%)

- SAT's Year  
yes ..... no .....
- Leave requested at the beginning of an academic year (September).  
yes ..... no .....
- Provisional booking seen and a copy taken and attached to this form.  
yes ..... no .....
- Is the leave for EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES?  
yes ..... no .....

**Bredenbury Primary School**  
**TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**  
**February 2014**

School's decision AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED (please delete as applicable).

Reason for the school's decision .....

.....

.....

Signed Headteacher ..... Dated .....

Signed Chair of Governors ..... Dated .....

Letter sent to Parent/Carer on .....

**Agreed by School Governors February 2014**