



Brickhouse Primary School Leave of Absence Policy

The law states that parents should **NOT** normally take their children out of school in term time, as it can be disruptive both to the child's education and to the school.

Brickhouse Primary School does not authorise term time absences, unless in exceptional circumstances, and these absences can only be agreed by the Headteacher.

Schools can use their discretion to grant authorised absences in a school year, **if the following apply:**

- *The parent, the child normally lives with, applies in writing to the school, at least 10 school days in advance of the absence.*
- *There are exceptional circumstances.*
- *The attendance of the pupil is not currently causing school concern.*

Schools can only agree leave of absence requests within a school year in exceptional circumstances and this will be taken on a case-by-case basis as well as considering proportionality of unauthorised absence including previous requests, including those of 10 days or more.

The Governing Board of the school supports this and will only authorise absences:

- *in exceptional circumstances (examples listed below)*
- *after considering the child's attendance at the time of request for the academic year.*

Special reasons or exceptional circumstances we **may** agree to:

- A visit to a relative with a terminal illness in a different country
- The death of a person close relative to the family (in or out of the country)
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.

- Holidays for fostering or adoption purposes
- Religious observance (In this instance the School Extended Holiday Policy will be activated)
- To attend a wedding of a person close to the family, this may include travel if the wedding is outside of this country
- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.

Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside the above, the Headteacher agrees to consult with the LA and/or Governing Board prior to any authorisation being given to the parent.

If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times, the Head teacher must be convinced that absence from school is the **only** option:

- *The first half term of any academic year (applies to all pupils)*
- *Year 6 transition days (for pupils in Year 6)*
- *Year 6 SAT's week (for pupils in Year 6)*
- *During the Phonics Screening period (for pupils in Year 1 and some Year 2)*
- *During the Year 4 Multiplication Tests period (for pupils in Year 4)*
- *At any time specified by the school (this will be communicated to parents by each school)*

The school will not agree or consider the following leave of absence requests:

- If an application is made because there is a cheap holiday and the booking has been made in advance anyway.
- If the application is based on the ability to have a desired accommodation
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods
- There is an overlap with the beginning or end of term
- Another sibling from a secondary school has time off school and the school holidays do not coincide.
- A special treat for your child
- Where a parent has inflexible patterns in their career that do not coincide with the school holidays.
- If the application form is incomplete
- If the request is put into school later than 10 school days prior to the absence

As a school we will also take into consideration the following when deciding on the authorisation of your request.

- There must be only **one request for the academic year**. If one absence has been taken, we will not authorise another.
- The ability of your child to catch up with the work they will miss.
- Your child's current attendance levels

The above are **not definitive** lists but merely to be deemed as a guideline to work to and are now the basis of our school policy.

All children of compulsory school age (5 to 16) should receive suitable education by regular attendance at school. If a child is registered at school, parents have the primary legal responsibility for ensuring that the child attends regularly.

Prosecutions, fixed penalty notices and other sanctions may be imposed for the minority of parents (see below) who are simply unwilling to engage voluntarily with the school and/or Local Authority to address their children's attendance issues, **this includes unauthorised holidays**.

Please note:

Should parents still decide to take their children out of school during term time, a "Leave of Absence" form must be collected from the office.

*This form must be **FULLY completed** on BOTH SIDES, and handed into school **at least 10 school days before the absence**.*

Parents will be informed in writing within 5 days of the Headteacher's decision to authorise or unauthorise the request.

Where the absence is recorded as "unauthorised", in line with legislation and our school attendance policy we, as a school, may refer this to the Attendance & Prosecution Service. Such a referral may lead to a Penalty Notice being issued which for a first offence is £160 per parent per child, reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days. For a second offence, which can occur within three years of a first offence, is £160 per parent per child, with no reduction.

Unpaid penalty notices after 28 days may result in prosecution

A third offence and any further offences, which again can occur within three years of a first offence, will go straight to prosecution under the Single Justice Procedure and for this magistrates can fine up £1,000 and parents will receive a criminal record.

The impact of an absence in term time is significant on your child's attainment and every lesson does count. Please consider this and the above information carefully before planning or even applying for an absence in term time.

As stated, all requests must be made via our Leave of Absence Form, which is available from the school office.

Date: September 2025

Review: September 2026