



# LAWLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

ARLESTON LANE, LAWLEY, TELFORD, SHROPSHIRE, TF4 2PR

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## 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 to the Headteacher the request form below. 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. From August 19<sup>th</sup> 2024 the Government have introduced a new 'national framework for Penalty Notices'. (in Telford & Wrekin the changes apply from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024).

There are significant changes that parents need to be aware of:

3. Penalty Notices are increasing to £160 from September 2024. This can be reduced to £80 but only for the first Penalty Notice issued, if paid within 21 days – this reduction does not apply to any subsequent Penalty Notice.
4. Any 2<sup>nd</sup> Penalty Notice, to the same parent for the same child, issued within three years of the date of the first Penalty Notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160
5. A third Penalty Notice will not be issued within a three year rolling period, to the same parent for the unauthorised absence of the same child, - alternative action or legal measures will be utilised for subsequent offences.
6. If in an individual case the local authority believes a Penalty Notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. For example, when a parent purposefully tries to avoid a Penalty Notice by taking their child out of school when there is only four pupil days in school and the fifth day is for example a PD day or bank holiday attached to that week.
7. In some circumstances a 'Notice to Improve' may be issued – However, a Notice to Improve will only be used in cases where support is appropriate. They will not be issued in cases of unauthorised leave in term time for holidays, where information for parents is included on school's website or a simple warning by the school that a Penalty Notice could be issued if unauthorised leave in term time is taken will suffice.
8. In developing and publishing the new national framework, the Government has renewed appeals to parents not to take their children out of school during term time. The Governors and Headteacher of this school support this and students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances. The DfE Guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance (Aug 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.

9. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents need, therefore, 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;
  - the age of the child;
  - the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements;
  - the overall attendance pattern of the child;
  - the nature of the trip.
  - students/pupils on examination courses or due to take SATS will **not** normally be granted leave of absence
  - whether the same trip could be taken during the 13 weeks school is closed to pupils?
10. 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. It is possible that because of these factors different decisions may be made. It is hoped that if this situation arises parents will be persuaded to accept the reasons for refusal given and, thereby, withdraw any other requests.
11. 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.
12. 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, to make known the whereabouts of the child, **his/her place at the school could be lost.**
13. 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 as detailed previously. Failure to pay the Penalty fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to Court proceedings.

**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) ..... Date of birth .....

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

Date due back in school:.....

My child will be accompanied during the leave by:

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

The exceptional circumstances and reason for this request are: -

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

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

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**For Office Use Only**

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

Current Attendance.....%                      Last Year's Attendance.....%

Number of school sessions previously taken as leave in term time .....

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: