

Student Leave of Absence Policy



Lealands
High School

Student Leave of Absence Policy

(SJW)

Lealands High School

January 2026

Student Leave of Absence Policy & Procedure

Term Time Leave Policy *The school has adopted the following Term Time Leave Policy in conjunction with Legrave Primary and Pirton Hill Primary*

1. INTRODUCTION

Lealands High School policies are designed to support the school ethos, aims and vision. Lealands is a positive learning community which is fully inclusive to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Our aims are outlined in our Home School Agreement.

Our aims:

Excellence in everything we do

- Everyone achieves success and makes excellent progress
- We all continually improve what we do and work hard
- We care about being the best we can be and getting the best out of those around us

Everyone has responsibility

- To prepare young people for life and a positive future
- To ensure that school is a safe place
- To help and support others to grow and succeed

Respect for all

- Everyone is valued for their contribution
- All are cared for and supported so that needs are met
- We recognise and celebrate the talents, gifts and uniqueness of every individual

In order to achieve these aims students, parents and the school need to work in partnership.

Our vision is to be:

*Everyone **achieves excellence**, demonstrates **respect** for all and takes **responsibility** for their own actions, while helping others to be successful.*

We strive to achieve this vision in all that we do and staff, students, parents, governors, other school stakeholders and partners are all an important part of making this happen.

2. Rationale

The Education (Student Registration) Regulations 2006 have been amended and came into force from 1st September 2013. The amendments remove references to “holiday” from school and extended leave of absence as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days.

HEADTEACHERS MAY NOT GRANT ANY LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME UNLESS THERE ARE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

The law does not give any entitlement to parents/carers to take their child on holiday during term time. Headteachers have the discretion to authorise leave of absence only in **EXCEPTIONAL** circumstances and it is only

for the Headteacher to determine what is truly exceptional. School days are precious; children only attend school 190 out of 365 days. There are 175 days a year which parents/carers can use for any activities other than school.

Section detailing non exceptional circumstances deleted

3. APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Requests must be made in advance or the absence cannot legally be authorised. All requests must be made at least two weeks in advance to the Headteacher by completing the school application form (**see appendix A**). A parent/carer with whom the child resides must make the application even though the student may not be taking the proposed leave with them. The form must be fully completed, both parents should sign and you will receive a written response confirming if the request will be authorised or not.

If you are travelling abroad you will need to supply the school with confirmation of your return travel tickets. Booking details may be requested at a later date.

4. UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

If you take your child out of school without the school's prior authorisation the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (which is illegal) and noted in your child's records. Leave of absence can only be authorised by the Headteacher.

Where a parent/carer has taken their child on leave of absence during term time for 5 consecutive school days or more, without the Headteacher's authorisation, Luton Local Authority will consider legal intervention.

Penalty notices are per parent, per child as appropriate, so if there are 2 parents both will have to pay the fine. Penalty notices are an alternative to prosecution for failing to ensure a child's regular attendance and will only be used once per student in an academic year. Second offences could result in immediate prosecution.

The Luton Borough Council Attendance Support Team may issue a fine once the leave of absence is taken and as such each parent will be subject to a Penalty Notice / fine of £80.00 per child per parent. This fine increases to £160.00 per child per parent if not paid within 21 days from the date that the penalty notice was initially issued. Part payments are not accepted. There is no appeal process for a penalty notice. Unpaid Penalty Notices result in prosecution for the absence in the magistrate's court. Please note all adults with care of the child are usually liable.

5. FAILURE TO RETURN TO SCHOOL ON THE DATE EXPECTED

If there is a reason which delays the student in returning to school the parent/carer must inform the school immediately. The school will require evidence of this issue and will then decide whether extended absence is authorised. For any travel arrangements outside of the UK we require proof of return flights, prior to the leave being taken. This may prevent you from receiving unauthorised absence for your child if they are unable to return on the date expected. Each case will be assessed individually and medical evidence from abroad will not be accepted routinely as evidence that a student was unable to attend school.

6. ROLL REMOVAL

A student can be removed from roll in either of these circumstances:

- If you take your child on leave of absence which has been authorised by the school but your child fails to return on the agreed date, any extra time absence from school will be counted as unauthorised. If your child fails to return within ten days of the expected date of return and no return date is supplied then the school may remove

your child from the school roll and notify the Local Authority accordingly.

- Or if your child has 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and no return date is supplied.



APPENDIX 1 - STUDENT LEAVE OF ABSENCE APPLICATION FORM

Luton

Request for leave of absence from school during term time

This should be completed before booking any travel arrangements

To be completed by the Parent/Guardian

Pupil's Name _____ Class/Tutor Group _____

Address _____

Ethnicity _____ Date of birth _____

Date of absence request From _____ / _____ /20_____ To _____ / _____ /20_____

Reason for application
.....

Has your child had term time leave from 19th August 2024? Yes / No

Dates of term time leave already taken: -.....

1st Parent/Guardian details

First name _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Date of application _____ / _____ /20_____

2nd Parent/Guardian details

First name _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

I have read the leave of absence information overleaf and the School's Attendance Policy

1st Parent/Guardian signature _____ 2nd Parent/Guardian signature _____

School response

If the child has had previous unauthorised leave, please state dates and number of days taken

Current leave agreed/Not agreed (delete) Reason:

.....

If leave is to be authorised, the following must be completed

Travelling abroad? **Yes/No** Country _____ Return date: _____ / _____ / _____

Proof of return date (*tickets/e mail etc*) _____

Response sent by email/ posted to parent/s by 1st class post. **Date:**

Please see overleaf for further information regarding the policy on leave of absence from school

Leave of Absence

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 have been amended and come into force from 1st September 2013. **Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

Requests for leave of absence should not normally be granted for the purposes of a holiday. The law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Head Teachers have the discretion to authorise leave of absence in **exceptional** circumstances and it is only for the Head Teacher to determine what is truly exceptional. School days are precious; children only attend school 190 out of 365 days. There are 175 days a year which parents can use for any activities other than school.

Applications for Leave of absence

Requests must be made in advance or the leave cannot be authorised. All requests should normally be made at least two weeks in advance to the Head Teacher by completing the school application form. A parent/adult with whom the child resides with must make the application even though the pupil may not be taking the proposed leave with them. The form must be fully completed and you will receive a written response confirming if the request will be authorised or not. **If you are travelling abroad you will need to supply us with confirmation of your booking including date booked and return flight tickets, such as bringing a copy of the flight tickets into the school reception for us to copy.**

Unauthorised Absence

If you take your child out of school without the school's prior authorisation the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (which is illegal) and noted in your child's school records. Leave of absence can only be authorised by the Head Teacher.

Where a parent/carer has taken their child on leave of absence during term time for 10 unauthorised sessions (equivalent to) 5 school days or more, without the Head Teacher's authorisation the following will apply:

First Offence Penalties

- The first penalty notice issued to each parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at:

£160.00 if not paid within 21 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence (within 3 years from 19th August 2024)

- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at:

A flat rate of £160.00 if paid within 21 days.

Third Offence and any further offences (within 3 years from 19th August 2024)

- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include considering **prosecution** but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

- Where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, for example returning to school on the fourth day (before the five-day minimum) or using the days before and after school holiday dates during the academic year, or repeated absence for birthdays or other family events. The local authority will exercise discretion and consider issuing a penalty notice if appropriate.

Penalty Notices are per parent, per child as appropriate, so if there are 2 parents both will need to pay the fine for each child. Part payments are not accepted. There is no appeal process for a penalty notice. Unpaid Penalty Notices result in prosecution for the absence in the magistrate's court. Please note all adults with care of the child are usually liable. **Penalty Notices are an alternative to prosecution for failing to ensure a child's regular attendance.**

Failure to return to school on the date expected

If there is a reason which delays the pupil in returning to school the parent/guardian must inform the school immediately. The school will require evidence of this issue and will then decide whether the absence can be authorised. For any travel arrangements outside of the UK we require proof of return flights, prior to the leave being taken, this may protect you from receiving unauthorised absence for your child and a fine if they are unable to return on the date expected. Each case will be assessed individually and medical evidence from abroad is not routinely accepted. Please note prolonged unauthorised absence from school can also result in your child's name being removed from the school roll and on return you would need to re-apply for another school place.