



Friday 12th September 2025



Weekly Newsletter

Jeans for Genes

On Friday 19th September, we will be celebrating 'Jeans for Genes' day in school. Children are invited to swap their usual skirt, shorts or trousers for a pair of jeans as we fundraise for this fantastic cause. The charity behind the initiative raise money to help and support some of the most vulnerable people in the UK. As usual, all payments will be taken via the ParentMail app.



Parent/Carer Drop-in Sessions

In the final week of September, we would like to invite parents and carers to our special 'Drop-in Sessions'. This is a chance for you to have a brief chat and catchup with your child's teacher to see how they have settled into their new class.

The sessions will be as follows:

Monday 29th September- 3:30pm-4:30pm

Tuesday 30th September- 8:00am-8:30am

Wednesday 1st September- 3:30pm-5:15pm

NEW CLASS PARENT DROP-IN

Monday 29th September- 3:30pm-4:30pm

Tuesday 30th September- 8:00am-8:30am

Wednesday 1st October- 3:30pm- 5:00pm

ALL PARENTS ARE WELCOME TO POP INTO SCHOOL FOR A BRIEF AND INFORMAL UPDATE ON HOW YOUR CHILD HAS SETTLED INTO THEIR NEW CLASS. IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE ABOUT THE YEAR AHEAD. YOU DO NOT NEED TO BOOK AN APPOINTMENT AND MAY ATTEND ANYTIME DURING THE ALLOCATED SLOTS.

Home time arrangements

Parents and carers are politely reminded to inform us of any changes to the routine collection of your children. If you arrange for an alternative adult to collect your child, you must notify us via Tapestry or by telephoning the school office.

We may request a photo to be uploaded to Tapestry if the adult has never collected before. Please note, for safeguarding reasons, we cannot accept messages about home time collection to be passed on through the children.

Reminder: Reception home time moves to 3:20pm from Monday 15th September.

Sporting News

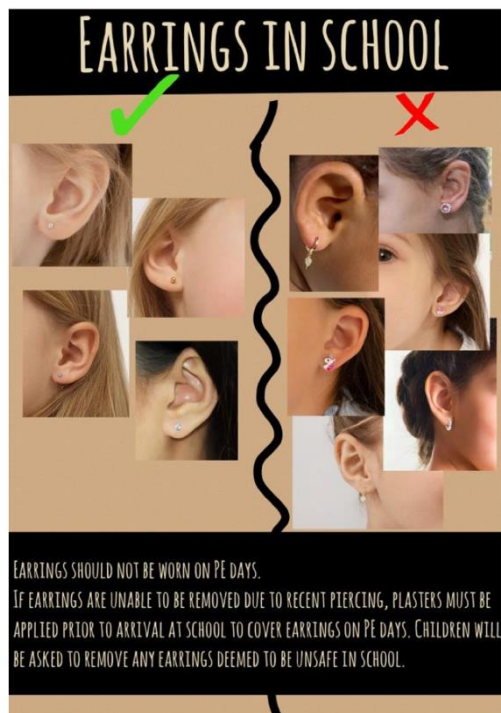
As we begin the new school year, we are hoping to build on the success of our sporting provision from last year- keep an eye out on Tapestry in the coming weeks as we start our after-school clubs. And sporting events begin.

Thought of the Week

One small
positive
thought
in the morning
can change your
whole day

👂 Earrings In School 👂

We have noticed that since returning from summer, many children are now wearing earrings that are not inline with school policy. Earrings are allowed, but they should be a single, small stud. We ask that they are not worn on PE days. Please see the image below for further information. Thanks for your cooperation.



🍌🍏 Morning Break: snacks 🍏🍌

This is a polite reminder regarding children's morning fruit snack. Children are allowed to bring to school some fresh fruit in. We do not allow cereal bars or alternative snacks for morning breaks, and this is in line with our healthy food strategy/approach. Please make sure any food containers are small enough to fit in a child's tray.

As part of the National Fruit Scheme, school are able to provide children with fruit snacks for afternoon breaks. We would also like to remind you about cutting grapes that are sent in as either a snack or as part of lunchboxes into quarters as they are a potential choking hazard. Please see the image below:



🍌🍏 Healthy Lunchboxes 🍏🍌

Since returning from the summer break, we have noticed an increased number of unsuitable items in children's packed lunches. Please see the attached guidance on how to ensure your child's lunch provides them with a balanced meal that will help them to learn and be healthy. Thanks for your cooperation.

App of the Week

Solvemoji



A great app to develop your problem-solving skills in a fun and engaging way- can you get to the top of the leaderboard?

⚠️ Holidays – not allowed in term time ⚠️

Again, we are continuing to receive notifications from families regarding taking holidays in term time. We politely remind parents and carers that holidays should not be taken in school time. Holidays are unauthorised absences and may result in penalty fines, including the final week of term can result in an EPN Fine that can be issued from a September return. Holidays in term time also have a detrimental effect on children's emotional well-being as often when they return to school, particularly after a 2-week absence, friendship groups have often moved on/shifted. If you have any queries about this matter, then please speak to Mrs. Hughes.

Thank you for your cooperation.

DIARY DATES

DATE	Event
Each Sunday	St Mary's Church Sunday Service @ 10am with Sunday School. Junior Park 2K Run @ Leigh Sports Village (free for 4-11yr. Old's) 9am
Friday 19 th September	Jeans for Genes Day
W/C Monday 29 th September	Parent/Carer Drop-in Sessions
Tuesday 30 th September	Year 6 Visit to The Westleigh School

Dear Parents and Carers,

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO THE LAW REGARDING PENALTY NOTICES FOR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

A new National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence, including unauthorised holiday absence, is being introduced following changes to the law. These new Government regulations will come into effect from 19 August 2024, and we wanted to bring this to your attention now, as it will affect when penalty notices are issued in Wigan.

In line with the [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk), Wigan Council will prioritise the 'support first' approach expecting that support will have been offered to families in cases where it is appropriate, and parents/carers are encouraged to communicate with the school should any support be required to improve attendance.

Penalty Notices are requested by schools and academies and issued by the Local Authority to the parents/carers of statutory school age children, per parent, per child. For example: two children in a family absent from school for a leave of absence may result in each parent receiving a Penalty Notice for each child at the below rates.

What are the changes?

1. There will be a new national threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions for any reason (equivalent to 5 school days) within a rolling 10 school week period for when a penalty notice must be considered.
2. The new rules mean you will no longer be able to take your child out of school for one week's holiday without a penalty notice being issued.
3. There will be an increase in the penalty fine from £60 to £80 if paid in 21 days. If the fine is not paid by the first 21 days, it will rise to £160 if paid within 28 days of being issued.
4. If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a 3-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.
5. If a parent then commits a third offence in a 3-year rolling period, the local authority will need to consider other enforcement options available to them.

We would like to thank parents and carers for their support in making sure that children do not miss any learning time.

Yours sincerely,



Catherine Pealing
Assistant Director – Education

FAQs

If I have already booked a holiday for next year, could I receive a penalty fine at the new higher rate?

Yes, if the absence has not been authorised by the Head Teacher of your child's school. Remember, only a Head Teacher can agree whether an absence can be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Who can be issued with a penalty notice?

- **Each parent can receive a fine for each child who has had unauthorised absence from school.**
- **In education law, anyone who lives with a child and who has day-to-day care of the child is also considered to be a parent whether they are the biological parent or not. For example, this will include step-parents and partners.**

Do the new rules only apply to holidays during term time?

- **No, it applies to all unauthorised absence from school including holidays. Unauthorised absence includes other absence that has not been agreed such as truancy, arriving late after the register has closed and failing to provide reasons for absence.**

How do I request for my child to have leave granted during term time?

- **You must submit an Absence Request form at least 20 days before the proposed absence. It will be for your child's Head Teacher to decide as to whether there are exceptional circumstances that will allow them to grant the time off. Do not assume that the absence will be granted until you have received confirmation from the school.**

Do the 10 sessions of unauthorised absence have to be taken all at the same time before a penalty fine is issued to the parent/carer?

- **No, a penalty fine can be issued for any combination of absences over a 10-week rolling period. They can be consecutive or non-consecutive and can span over two terms.**

What happens if I am issued with a penalty fine and I don't pay it?

- **Unauthorised absence from school is an offence under s444 of the Education Act 1996. A penalty fine is an opportunity for you to settle out of court. If you don't take this opportunity, you can be prosecuted for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance.**

What should I do if I am worried about my child's attendance?

- **In the first instance you should contact your child's school and ask for advice on how they can support you to improve the situation.**



Leigh St John's C.E. Primary School

Healthier Packed Lunches for Children

What you need to know

Eating well is important. Children need to eat well as it will give them energy and nutrients to grow and develop, be healthy and active.

A healthy, enjoyable lunch gives children the energy they need to learn and play at school.



This leaflet provides information on how to pack a healthier lunch. The information in this leaflet follows the government's packed lunch guidelines.

Practical Tips for a Healthy Lunchbox

- ☺ Try to vary the contents of the lunchbox daily. That way you can ensure your child is getting the variety of nutrients their bodies need to function and grow.
- ☺ Involve your child in preparing their lunchbox. They are more likely to enjoy food they have made themselves.
- ☺ Wash your hands before handling food. Wash fruit and vegetables before use and put food in clean containers.
- ☺ To keep food fresh, make sure it is stored properly: lunches packed the night before need to be stored in the fridge. If using rice, make sure it is cooled quickly and stored in the fridge overnight. To keep your lunch fresh during the day, use a cool bag and put in a frozen drink or reusable ice pack.
- ☺ Keep different breads in the freezer so you can just take out and defrost what you need for one day's lunchbox. Using different breads will make the lunchbox more interesting and enjoyable.
- ☺ If your child refuses to eat brown bread, try a lighter variety or make sandwiches using a slice of white and a slice of wholemeal bread.
- ☺ For variety, use pitta strips, crackers, bread sticks, or fruit and vegetable finger foods with a dip.
- ☺ Always try to add a little salad to a sandwich. To avoid soggy sandwiches, dry the salad before adding it to the sandwich or put it in a separate sandwich bag or tub.
- ☺ Make a fruit smoothie by blending juice and fruit together, or a yoghurt or milk drink by mixing yoghurt or semi-skimmed milk with pureed fruit.
- ☺ Make a lower-fat salad dressing by mixing it with some low-fat yoghurt or semi skimmed milk.
- ☺ You can use leftovers; for example, rice and curry, vegetable pizza or pasta and sauce.
- ☺ Make a salad using rice, potato or pasta from the night before, mixed with vegetables, beans and so on.

For more information and advice go to:

- www.eatwell.gov.uk/
- www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/packedlunches/

Contact Information

Natalie Hatton or Lesley Hughes

What is a healthy packed lunch?

Starchy Foods

Base each meal on a starchy food, such as bread, potato, rice, pasta, yam. Starchy foods give energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

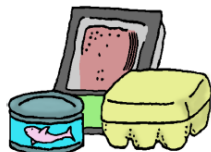
- ☺ Bread, try different types, such as pitta bread, wraps or bread rolls.
- ☺ Other starchy foods, such as pasta or rice.
- ✓ Whole grain varieties are best for fibre, which is vital for a healthy digestive system.



Meat and Alternatives

Add some protein, for example meat, fish, eggs, beans or pulses. Protein foods build muscles and provide minerals.

- ☺ Lean meats, such as chicken, turkey or ham.
- ☺ Include oily fish, such as pilchards, sardines or mackerel at least once every three weeks.
- ☺ Egg, such as quiche or omelette.
- ☺ or items made of these, such as .
- ☺ Meat alternatives, such as tofu or tempeh.
- ☺ Dishes containing pulses, beans or meat, for example dahl, stew or bean salad.
- ⚠ Meat products such as sausage rolls, sausages and chipolatas, pies and pastries, fried foods should not be included more than once a fortnight.
- ⚠ Use butter, margarine, mayonnaise or salad dressings sparingly, because these can be high in fat, or use lower fat alternatives.
- ✗ The school does not allow nuts in packed lunches.



A healthy packed lunch is a balanced meal providing a variety of nutrients, to be found in four food groups:

Milk and Dairy Foods

Include a dairy product or dairy alternative, such as fromage frais or tzatziki. These foods provide calcium necessary for strong bones and teeth, as well as providing protein and vitamins.

- ✓ Lower fat varieties are healthier.



Fruit and Vegetables

Don't forget to include fruit and vegetables. You can use fresh, frozen, tinned or dried. Fruit and vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals and fibre necessary for the body to function properly and to keep you strong and healthy.

- ☺ Add tomato, lettuce or beetroot to a sandwich.
- ☺ A vegetable dish, such as salad or roast vegetables.
- ☺ Fresh fruit, such as apple, banana or pear.
- ☺ Dried fruit, such as raisins, apricots or figs.
- ☺ Fruit salad (fresh or tinned in juice) or vegetable salad.
- ☺ Finger foods, such as cherry tomatoes, cucumber sticks or celery. Good with a dip, such as houmous or guacamole.
- ✓ Use fresh fruit and vegetables, which are in season to help the environment and enjoy variety!
- ✓ All packed lunches should contain at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetable or salad.



Drinks

Drinks, especially water, help children to concentrate and feel well. Water is freely available in school.

- ☺ Other healthy drinks such as milk, pure 100% juice, sparkling water, fruit smoothie or yoghurt or milk drink can also be included.



Snacks and Confectionery

Snack foods may be included occasionally but aim to make healthier choices. Snack foods tend to be high in fat, sugar and salt. Foods high in fat can cause excessive weight and may lead to heart disease. High sugar foods are high in calories and bad for teeth. High salt foods may increase blood pressure, which can lead to heart disease and some cancers.

For a healthier snack:

- ☺ Replace sweets and chocolate with dried fruit, a small bunch of grapes or fruit salad.
- ☺ Replace cakes and pastries with fruit bread or malt loaf.
- ☺ Replace salted savoury snacks with rice cakes or breadsticks.
- ✗ Packed lunches should not contain chocolate, items containing chocolate, sweets, salted savoury snacks or crisp-like products.