

Dear Parent/Carer,

The Department for Education have announced important amendments to legislation surrounding holidays in term time. We have a statutory obligation to inform you about this within each academic year.

From the 1st September 2013, the new legislation does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. The legislation also specifies that any application for holiday must be in exceptional circumstances and must be put in writing to the head teacher either through a letter addressed to the head teacher, or by completing an absence request form, outlining the exceptional circumstances. As a result of this, please be advised that it is very unlikely that holidays during term time will be authorised. The Local Authority will be monitoring all school absences during term time and challenging those school and parents that do not adhere to the new legislation.

Further to this, should a family take their child out of school for an unauthorised absence this may result in the school requesting the Local Authority to a Fixed Penalty Notice to each parent/carer under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 for failure to ensure their child's regular attendance to school. The penalty details are listed in the table below.

Penalties for Unauthorised Absence		
Timeline	One Child	Two Children
Paid within 21 days	£60 per parent	£60 per child = £120 per parent
After 21 days and before 28 days	£120 per parent	£120 per child = £240 per parent
After 28 days	You will receive a summons to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the ground you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance.	You will receive a summons to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the ground you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance.

The reasons behind the change in this legislation by the Department for Education is to raise attendance and therefore improve standards.

To illustrate the impact of taking holidays in term time, it was noted that if children are taken away for a two-week holiday every year and have the average number of days off for sickness and appointments, then by the time they leave school at sixteen they will have missed a year of school.

Further information can be found on our web site including a letter to schools and parents from the local authority: www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00223868/r

Yours sincerely,

Mrs L Houldsworth
Head Teacher

