

Dear Parent/Carer

Holidays Taken During Term Time

The Local Authority will support a Principal who declines to authorise a holiday in term time. A pupil who takes a ten day holiday between September and May will only attain below 94% attendance (DfE absence survey period). Should a child be taken out of school for a two week holiday every year of their school life, they would miss over half a year of schooling. Obviously, that would have an enormous effect on their ability to achieve. Children who miss school will have difficulty catching up and may fall considerably behind their class mates. That will affect the pupils' academic attainment and possibly their future life chances.

There is a general misconception regarding a parent's right to take children out of school to accompany them on family holidays. In fact, the legal situation states that, whilst a parent may request a holiday, the authorisation of that holiday can only be made by a Principal. (Stated legal case – Bromley v C March 2006 extract *"considering whether the holidays were "justified", is a matter for the school alone to decide"*). Principals will, therefore, only authorise such leave in exceptional circumstances.

The locally agreed Code of Conduct (*Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and Education and Inspection Act 2006*) states "In cases of absence from school when the pupil has been taken on holiday during term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school, a Penalty Notice may be issued". Families must consider this possibility if they decide to take a holiday contrary to a Principal's decision not to authorise the absence.

Whilst considering the arrangements for the next family holiday, I would urge you to reconsider if your intentions are to take that holiday in term time. Please investigate the market fully and enjoy your family holiday without affecting your young people's academic future.

Yours faithfully

J Clark (Mrs)
Education Welfare Service Manager