

The law

Parents do not have an automatic right to take their child for term time holidays. Only the Head Teacher can authorise these holidays at their discretion.

Schools may authorise, in exceptional circumstance, in advance, a request for a period of leave of up to ten days in any academic year. The request for leave must come from a parent with whom the child normally resides and must be for the purpose of an **annual family holiday**.

If the school does not authorise an absence in term time for the purpose of an annual family holiday then the school is required to notify the Local Authority if the pupil goes and a **Penalty Notice** may be issued. A separate Penalty Notice would be issued to both parents for each child taken out of school for unauthorised holiday. In other words, a two parent family taking two children of school age for an unauthorised holiday could receive 4 Penalty Notices. If a Penalty Notice is paid within 28 days the cost is £50, if paid in more than 28 days but less than 42 days this rises to £100.

If a child then stays away from school for more than ten days this must be recorded as an unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance.

The Decision

When deciding whether to allow term-time leave, school will give consideration to:-

- The child's age
- The time and duration of the leave
- The child's record of attendance
- Previous term-time leave

What you should consider

There are times during a school year when a child may experience particular problems because of term-time leave such as:-

- Close to exams or tests, eg Standard Attainment Tests (S.A.T.'s) in year Two, Six and Nine
- During GCSE (including mock examinations)
- During the first year at a new school
- At the beginning of a new school term.

If the school refuses a request for term-time leave and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and a Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority. A separate notice will be issued to each parent for each child.

A Penalty Notice is a fine of £50 if paid between 1-28 days after issue, increasing to £100 if paid between 29-42 days.

SD4



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TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

“IS SAVING MONEY MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOUR CHILD’S EDUCATION”

Taking holidays in term time, particularly at critical times like during exams or at the start of a new school year, can seriously interrupt your child’s education. Parents should think carefully before taking term time holidays. If your child is already struggling in school or has an existing attendance problem the Local Authority is advising schools not to authorise term time holidays. Taking an unauthorised holiday during term time could result in you being given a £50 Penalty Notice.