

Dear Parents/Carers,

Since September 2013, headteachers in England have no longer had the discretion to approve absences of up to 10 days a year for family holidays in "special circumstances". The new rules introduced tougher criteria of "exceptional circumstances".

Parents and carers are legally responsible for ensuring their children attend school. Failure to do so is an offence under section 444 of the [Education Act 1996](#). Parents have no legal right to take their children out of school during term time for holidays.

**The Department for Education state** "Poor attendance at school can have a hugely damaging effect, and children who attend school regularly are nearly four times more likely to achieve five or more good GCSEs than those who are regularly absent."

#### **What happens to parents who break the rules?**

Parents who do not have the school's permission for their child's absence face a fine of **£120 per pupil, per parent**, (Reduced to £60 per pupil, per parent) if paid within twenty one days. Those who refuse to pay can face court action and, if prosecuted, a fine of up to £2,500 and a possible jail sentence of up to three months.

Children who miss a significant period of time in school miss out on important teaching and learning and this absence can seriously harm the children's progress and attainment. That's especially true for young children: research evidence is unanimous that early-years education is vital for future attainment.

A child who takes a week's extra holiday each year at school will have missed at least 70 days – or the equivalent of more than three months of teaching – by the end of their time at school.

There are 12 weeks each academic year where you can plan and book your family trips, during the school holidays, without it affecting our child's education.

The school, alongside the Education Welfare Officer are more than happy to discuss your child's attendance. Please feel free to make an appointment with Mrs Jones-Spencer in the main office.

Kind Regards

Mr Hart

Headteacher Mr Tom Hart BA (Hons)