

# Holidays in Term Time

Dear Parent

This letter is intended to emphasise the importance of school attendance and the need to avoid holidays during school term time. It is only by working together that we will continue to improve the achievements of Warrington's young people.

Contrary to popular belief, there is no entitlement to ten days off school for family holidays. From September 1<sup>st</sup>, amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. All Warrington Head teachers have agreed in line with government guidance that, unless exceptional circumstances can be proved, any absence for a family holiday will be treated as an unauthorised absence. Alderman Bolton also reserve the right to fine both parents if they take term time holidays. More details are at the bottom of this page.

Parents sometimes believe that if a pupil takes time off school at the beginning or end of a school term that this does not matter as much as at other times of the year. The teaching of the national curriculum and the need to prepare pupils for national tests and examinations means that there are no longer times of the school year when pupils can be absent without missing essential learning opportunities.

Schools in Warrington have high targets for improving upon the already impressive achievements of their pupils and one of the issues that will hamper them in doing this is pupils being absent from school for reasons apart from illness.

I am sure that you want your child to have the best possible start in life that comes from doing as well as they can during their time at school. I would ask parents who are considering taking their children on holiday during term time to consider the possible impact on their learning.

## **Holidays in term time (taken from [www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence](http://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence))**

**You have to get permission from the head teacher if you want to take your child out of school during term time.**

You can only do this if:

- you make an application to the head teacher in advance (as a parent the child normally lives with)
- there are exceptional circumstances

It's up to the head teacher how many days your child can be away from school if leave is granted.

## **Fine**

Your local council can give each parent a fine of £60, which rises to £120 each if you do not pay within 21 days. If you do not pay the fine after 28 days you may be prosecuted for your child's absence from school.

## **Prosecution**

You could get a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court also gives you a Parenting Order.