**Please do not book holidays during term time. If you do, you may receive a penalty notice, a prosecution, or risk losing your child’s place in school.**

**Taking children out of school during term time**

The law was changed in 2013 and made it clear that head teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

You should not take your children out of school during term time unless you are granted authorised leave of absence by the head teacher.

If you do take your child out of school without the leave of absence being authorised, the head teacher may direct the Council to take measures to issue either a penalty notice or prosecute you as parents.

In certain circumstances, schools may remove the child from the register if leave of absence is taken for an unreasonable amount of time.

**Responsibility for paying the penalty notice**

The parent/carer named on the letter and on the invoice is responsible for paying the penalty notice. If penalty notices have been issued to two parents at the same address, each individual parent is responsible for paying their own penalty notice.

Under Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 a parent is defined as:

* All natural parents, whether they are married or not
* Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
* And any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person. Having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, is considered to be a parent in education law.

**How much a penalty notice costs**

The penalty notice is for £60, per parent, per child which rises to £120 if you don't pay within 21 days. If you don't pay the fine after 28 days you may be prosecuted (under Section 444 of the Education Act) for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school. You will receive a separate summons for this which will give you notice of the time and date of the court hearing.

You must pay the whole of the amount owing in one payment - you cannot pay in instalments and you cannot pay part of the penalty notice.