

Why shouldn't I take my child on holiday in term time?

Because your child may:

- Get behind in their school work.
- Get lower results in assignments, tests or examinations because of missed work.
- Miss tests, examinations or deadlines for assignments.
- Feel excluded from their group of friends when he/she returns.
- May not understand some new work and lose self confidence.

Any absence in term time destroys the continuity of a child's education and reduces their chances of success. Parents/carers are asked to take family holidays during the school holiday.

What the regulations say

Guidance issued by the Department of Education 2013 clearly states:

that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances

Remember

- You are advised to contact your child's school in advance before requesting any leave of absence.
- National studies have shown that there is a strong link between school attendance and attainment at school.
- Poor attendance can seriously disrupt learning and is strongly discouraged especially at the start of the new academic year and during periods of exams.
- A two week leave of absence every year in secondary school amounts to 10 weeks worth of education missed by the time your child sits GCSEs. This does not take account of other absences e.g. medical. If your child misses 10 weeks of education this may well affect their exam results.
- At primary school the same child will have missed 14 weeks of school. This could have a real impact on the basic literacy and numeracy skills of some children.
- Keeping children away from school for no good reason is a criminal offence.

You should be aware that if you take your child out of school for any leave of absence in term time without the authorisation of your child's head teacher you may be issued with a **FIXED PENALTY NOTICE.**

Information for parents/guardians about FIXED PENALTY NOTICES.

What is a Fixed Penalty Notice?

The Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 allows a Local Authority to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for poor school attendance. These notices require a penalty to be paid by each parent/carer of each pupil who has unauthorised absence from school.

What are the penalties?

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued the penalty is £60, when payment is made within 21 days. After 21 days it will increase to £120. **A Fixed Penalty Notice is issued per parent per child.** Failure to pay within 28 days could well result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court.

Questions you may ask

Q: Is my child entitled to a family holiday in term time?

A: No, the law says you do not have the right to take your child out of school for holidays or any leave of absence during term time.

Q: Can we request extended leave of absence in exceptional circumstances?

A: Any absence from school could be detrimental to a child's education. You will need to explain to the Head teacher the exceptional reasons that you require leave of absence.

Q: Where can I get further advice on this matter?

A: Always contact your child's school first.

You may also seek advice from an Education Welfare Officer who may be contacted through your local Childrens Action Team:

West—0118 937 6545

South—0118 937 6591

North—0118 937 6782

East—0118 937 2662

**Holidays are fine
but NOT in Term**

What you need to know



**Reading Borough Council
Education Welfare Service**

