

## Joint statement on Holidays in term time.

**This statement has been agreed by Coates Primary School, Alderman Jacobs School and Aspire Learning Trust, which incorporates Sir Harry Smith Community College, New Road School and Park Lane Primary and Nursery School.**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

Under the Education Act 1996, Cambridgeshire County Council has a statutory duty to take enforcement actions when parents fail to ensure regular school attendance of a child of compulsory school age, who is registered at a school. This could be a prosecution under section 444 of the above Act or the issuing of a Penalty Notice fine under section 444A of this Act.

A Penalty Notice would be an alternative to prosecution. In September 2013, amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removed references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. **The amendments make clear that Headteachers/Principals may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.** Whilst parents can provide explanations for absence, it is the Headteacher/Principal who should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

If leave of absence for exceptional circumstances has been denied and you take the child out of school, you may be subject to a **Formal Warning, Penalty Notice or face prosecution in court.** All the Whittlesey and Coates schools will continue to work very closely with Cambridgeshire County Council to implement the above enforcement actions, particularly when children are taken out of school on unauthorised leave/holiday.

Issuing a Penalty Notice results in:

A fine of £60 per parent, per child if payment is made to the Local Authority within 21 days. The cost increasing to £120 per parent, per child if payment is received after 21 days but before 28 days. Parents who fail to pay the fine within the specified time being liable for prosecution in a Magistrates' Court where, on conviction, a sentence of a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to three months in prison may be imposed. Penalty Notices may only be served in accordance with Cambridgeshire County Council's Code of Conduct, a copy of which is retained in each school.

The Headteacher/Principal will consult with the Education Welfare Officer and consider the seriousness of the non-attendance and the response from parents before issuing a Penalty Notice. Further advice and guidance on this matter can be located on the Department for Education website. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised.

