



16 July 2013

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to inform you about some important amendments to legislation surrounding holidays in term time that have been announced by The Department for Education (DfE). This legislation applies to all schools, including academies.

From the 1st September 2013, **the new law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.** Any applications for leave of absence must be in exceptional circumstances and the head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. Parents can be fined by the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

In the academic year 2011 to 2012, **9.7% of all absences in England were due to parents taking their children out of school during term time.** This high level of absence has led the DfE to make this important change to legislation.

At Tarporley High School and 6th Form College, our rates of absence are below national averages, and we appreciate that most parents do avoid taking their child on holiday during term time. We also fully appreciate the financial difficulties that some parents face when booking holidays, particularly during school holidays. However, there is an expectation that in common with all other schools we will introduce firm policies and stringent checks to ensure that there is a significant reduction in the number of absences during term time.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 previously allowed head teachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in "special circumstances" of up to ten school days leave per year. Head teachers could also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove reference to **family holidays** and **extended leave** as well as the statutory threshold of **ten school days**. Any applications for leave must be in exceptional circumstances and the head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave and should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. **Any request for authorisation of a term time holiday from September 2013 onwards should be addressed to myself as head teacher and should explain why the circumstances should be judged to be exceptional.**

Amendments have also been made to the 2007 Regulations in England (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices to each parent who fails to ensure their children's attendance at school. Parents currently must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days or £120 if they pay within 42 days. From **1st September 2013** the amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a Fixed Penalty Notice. Parents will have **21 days** instead of **28 days** to pay the **£60** if unpaid the fine will double to **£120** and parents will have **28 days** instead of **42 days** to pay.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support in this matter by not taking your child out of school during term time.

Further information can be obtained from www.dfe.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Sarah Lee

Headteacher

Tarporley High School and Sixth Form College

Eaton Road

Tarporley, Cheshire, CW6 0BL

Tel: 01829 732558

Fax: 01829 733945

www.tarporleyhigh.co.uk