

Children's Services
Executive Director: Jo Fisher

Children's Services
Hertfordshire County Council
CHO 126
Farnham House, Six Hills Way
Stevenage, Herts SG1 2FQ
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Term-Time Holidays and Leave of Absence

I hope this letter finds you well.

At Hertfordshire County Council, we are committed to ensuring every child receives a high-quality education. A key part of this is regular school attendance, which is essential for your child's academic success and personal development.

Following changes to legislation introduced by the Department for Education (DfE) in August 2024, schools are now required to treat requests for term-time leave—such as holidays—as unauthorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. In such cases, a penalty notice must be considered.

Exceptional circumstances are typically unavoidable, one-off events. Holidays taken for leisure or recreation do not meet this threshold.

If you believe your request involves exceptional circumstances, please discuss it with your child's Headteacher. Schools must consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts and background of the request. If leave is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days permitted.

Please note:

- All requests must be made in advance by the parent/carers with whom the child normally resides.
- The decision to authorise or unauthorise absence rests solely with the Headteacher.

Schools may apply to the Local Authority for a penalty notice to be issued for unauthorised leave.

Once issued

- There is no statutory right of appeal.
- The Local Authority may only withdraw a notice if it was issued incorrectly.
- If the penalty is not paid within the required timeframe, the Local Authority will initiate legal proceedings.

If you disagree with the Headteacher's decision, you should follow the school's complaints policy.

We know that you want the best for your child. By ensuring that any leave of absence is taken during designated school holidays, you are helping to support your child's learning, development, and attendance.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support.

Yours sincerely



Tony Fitzpatrick
Director, Education