



## Northamptonshire County Council

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Please ask for: Jonathan Lewis  
Tel: 01604 367960  
Our ref:  
Your ref:  
Date: 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016

Dear Parent/Carer,

The county council and its schools are very keen for all pupils in Northamptonshire to have the very best educational outcomes that are possible. Northamptonshire is currently under performing against to this expectation and following the launch of our 'Race To The Top' programme, we are reviewing all areas of how our schools perform to ensure this aspiration is met.

School attendance is a key area. In line with government expectations, the council firmly believes that for pupils to progress and achieve their full potential that they need to attend school. Changes to legislation in 2013 mean parents are no longer entitled to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. Headteachers would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional.

In Northamptonshire, the autumn term 2013 and spring term 2014, there were 39,672 days missed from primary schools and 57,781 days from secondary schools without permission. To date, despite changes in government legislation in 2013, the council has only chosen to issue a penalty notice after 10 days unauthorised absence. However to achieve our aspiration for the very best educational outcomes, we are proposing to issue penalties when children miss five consecutive school days or the equivalent of 5 days within a six week period from June 2016. This brings Northamptonshire in line with the majority of other Local Authorities.

The attached leaflet explains the policy and procedure in more detail and if you have any queries please contact the Educational and Inclusion Partnerships team at the following email address [attendance-admin@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:attendance-admin@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

County Hall  
George Row  
Northampton NN1 1ED  
w. [www.northamptonshire.gov.uk](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk)  
t. 0300 126 1000  
e. [attendance-admin@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:attendance-admin@northamptonshire.gov.uk)



I realise that the vast majority of parents do not take family holidays in term time as they recognise the significant impact this can have on their child's education. We hope you will continue to support us by not planning a leave of absence during term time.

I am sure you will be supportive of this decision which along with a range of other measures should lead to improvements in educational attainment and life chances for all pupils.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Lewis', is positioned above the printed name. The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first few letters.

**Jonathan Lewis**  
**Assistant Director Learning, Skills and Education**