



## Northamptonshire County Council

Tel: 01604 361250  
Our ref:  
Your ref:  
Date: 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016

Dear Parent/Carer,

The county council and its schools are determined that all pupils in Northamptonshire will have the highest educational outcomes that are possible. Northamptonshire is currently under performing against 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 they need to attend school. Changes to legislation in 2013 mean parents are no longer entitled to take their child out of school during term time. Any application for absence must only be in exceptional circumstances and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. For example, Headteachers would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional.

In Northamptonshire, 39,672 days were missed from primary schools and 57,781 days from secondary schools without permission across the autumn term 2013 and spring term 2014. 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, which are recorded as unauthorised absences. 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)

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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 have unauthorised absence 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 improvement in educational attainment and life chances for all pupils.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Lewis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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