



**HILLTOP JUNIOR SCHOOL**  
**Hill Avenue, Wickford, Essex SS11 8LT**  
**Tel: 01268 734649**  
4 September 2014

Dear Parents,

I would like to welcome our new pupils to school and to welcome back all other pupils. I hope you all enjoyed the summer break.

I would like to clarify the arrangements regarding leave of absence, as there appears to be some confusion. The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child out of school during term time and Headteachers are no longer able to grant leave of absence except under 'very exceptional circumstances'.

We work closely with the Education Welfare Service, who monitor absences of all pupils and meet with parents where levels of attendance are a cause for concern.

If a holiday is not authorised, and is taken without permission, the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service who may issue a penalty notice to each parent of £60 for each child to be paid within 21 days. If the penalty is not paid within the time scale the penalty will increase to £120. If the higher penalty is not paid within 28 days, the Education Welfare Service will then institute legal proceedings against you in the magistrate's court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure your child attends school regularly.

I do hope we do not have to issue any penalty notices and have attached an explanatory leaflet for your information. However, should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs A.J. Waite  
Headteacher