



**Learning and Communities
Attendance, Inclusion & Welfare
Service**

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Please ask for: Isabelle Morgan

Date 07.05.15

Our Ref

Your Ref

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: GOVERNMENT CHANGES RELATING TO HOLIDAY IN TERM TIME

As you will now be aware since 1st September 2013 all schools have been unable to authorise any requests for absence relating to holidays in term time. This was brought about by an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, which removed reference to holidays and the ten day period. The amendments made it clear that Head Teachers may not grant leave of absences during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

It has been really pleasing to see that overall absence across schools in Plymouth has continued to fall. However, absence as a result holidays taken during term times remains an issue.

The Local Authority is now satisfied that all parents are fully aware of the regulations and that schools will not authorise absence in term time unless for exceptional circumstances. A list of exceptional circumstances is available in schools but amongst the reasons that absence should not be authorised are:

- to care for other family members
- Family holiday
- Weddings abroad – regardless of whether it is for immediate family members
- Parent/Carer not able to take leave outside of term time
- Previous good attendance

We would like to remind all parent/carers if absence of 10 sessions (5 days) or more is taken without authorisation, it is the policy across all schools that penalty notices will be issued. The parent/carers will be fined £60 per pupil per parent, and if this is not paid within 21 days the fine will increase to £120 per pupil per parent. Please be aware the 10 absences do not have to be consecutive and can include, for example, long weekends taken on more than one occasion during an academic year.

In the event of non-payment, the Local Authority has no choice but to instigate Court proceedings for “failing to ensure the regular attendance at school for the period of the absence”. This is

something that the Local Authority would prefer to avoid as it results in much greater financial penalties being issued by the Court and parents receiving criminal records.

If a school has reason to believe an absence of 10 sessions or more is the result of a holiday being taken without a formal request or permission and they have sufficient evidence to prove this is the case, a request for a penalty fine will be made. It will be the parent/carers responsibility to prove that the absence should have been authorised. Where absences are less than 10 sessions a warning may be issued by the Education welfare Service.

We hope you will support your child's education and school by ensuring that your son/daughter obtains the maximum benefit from their time at school by attending punctually for the 190 days each year that the law requires and that holidays are taken during the 165 days your child is not required to attend school. If you have any questions about the content of this letter then please contact your child's school or the Education Welfare Service on 01752 307405.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Isabelle Morgan', with a small square mark above the first letter.

Isabelle Morgan
Inclusion and Attendance Manager
Learning and Communities