



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

Plymouth City Council
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Please ask for: Isabelle Morgan

Date

Our Ref

Your Ref

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: GOVERNMENT CHANGES RELATING TO HOLIDAY IN TERM TIME

As you would all be aware that from the 1st September 2013 all schools were unable to authorise any requests for absence relating to holidays in term time. This has been brought about by an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, which has removed reference to holidays and the ten day period. The amendments make 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 absence across schools in Plymouth, and particularly absence for holidays reduced dramatically this year. This was as a result of schools, and the local authority working to the statutory guidance given by the government. It is the law that children should not be out of school during school term time except in exceptional circumstances.

From September 2014, as the Local Authority are now satisfied that all parents are fully aware of the regulations, all schools should 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

If the absence is taken without authorisation, it will be the policy across all schools that if the absences are 10 sessions or more the school will be requesting a penalty fine in every case. The parent/carers will be fined £60 per pupil/ per parent, and if this is not paid within 21 days it will double.

In the event of non-payment the Local Authority will have no choice but to issue Court proceedings for “failing to ensure the regular attendance at school for the period of the absence”. If a school has reason to believe that a holiday had been taken without being requested and again the absence is 10

sessions or more, a penalty notice will be requested and a fine issued. 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 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, unless prevented from doing so by unavoidable circumstances. 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 circular mark above the first 'e'.

Isabelle Morgan
Inclusion and Attendance Manager
Learning and Communities