



Education Welfare Service
Education, Learning and Family Support

Parent / Carer

Plymouth City Council
Civic Centre
Plymouth PL1 2AA

T 01752 307405
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Please ask for: Brian Gould

1 September 2014

Our Ref BG

Your Ref

Dear Parent/Carer

Government Changes Relating to Holidays in Term Time

As you should be aware, from 1 September 2013 all schools were 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 has removed reference to holidays and the ten day period. The amendments make clear that Headteachers 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 apart from exceptional circumstances.

From September 2014, as the Local Authority is 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/carers 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 ten 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 ten sessions or more, a penalty notice will be requested and a fine issued. It will be the parent/carer's responsibility to prove that the absence should have been authorised. Where absences are less than ten sessions a warning may be issued by the Education Welfare Service.

It is hoped 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 307404/05.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. R. Gould', written in a cursive style.

Brian Gould
Senior Education Welfare Officer
Education, Learning and Family Support