



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

Plymouth City Council
Civic Centre
Plymouth PL1 2AA

T 01752 307405

F

E childrens/services@plymouth.gov.uk
www.plymouth.gov.uk

Please ask for: Isabelle Morgan

Date 14.09.15

Our Ref

Your Ref

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: CHANGES RELATING TO SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

As of 1st September 2013 Head Teachers 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 absence 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 of holidays taken during term times remains an issue.

Plymouth City Council has updated the Local Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices. Effective from 14th September 2015, all parent/carers should be aware that if absence of 8 sessions (4 days) or more is taken without authorisation within a 6 month period, it is the policy across all schools that a penalty notice 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 8 unauthorised absences do not have to be consecutive, in addition the new limit of 8 unauthorised sessions applies to general non-school attendance and holidays during term time.

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 8 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 notice will be made. It will be the parent/carers responsibility to prove that the absence should have been authorised. Where absences are less than 8 sessions a warning may be issued by the Inclusion, Attendance and 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 Inclusion, Attendance and Welfare Service on 01752 307405.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Isabelle Morgan', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Isabelle Morgan
Inclusion and Attendance Manager
Learning and Communities