

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-576
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/01725/14

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

1 September 2014

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 14 August, regarding petition P-04-576 from Bethany Walpole.

The Welsh Government has produced two pieces of guidance for local authorities which cover the authorisation of absence during term time for school holidays: Inclusion and Pupil Support, and the All Wales Attendance Framework.

Both documents advise schools and local authorities of their discretionary power to authorise up to ten days absence per year for a family holiday during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to remove their children from school for a holiday, but they may apply for permission in advance. Upon receiving a request the school should consider the time of year of the proposed trip, length and purpose of the holiday, impact on continuity of learning, circumstances of the family and the wishes of parents as well as the overall attendance pattern of the child.

I have provided a link to the relevant section of each document for ease of reference:

Inclusion and Pupil Support – Section 4

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/pupilsupport/inclusionpupilsupportguidance/section4/?lang=en>

All Wales Attendance Framework – Section 1, page 74

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/pupilsupport/framework/?lang=en>

In your letter you also refer to an associated e-petition that had collected 10,300 signatures at the time of your writing. I understand there is an e-petition, apparently a 'sister petition' to the one presented to the Petitions Committee, hosted on a website called '38 Degrees' which calls for the Welsh Government to 'Reverse the Education Authorities rule that Head teachers are no longer able to authorise absence for family holidays during term time'. I have provided the link to this e-petition for ease of reference:

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/let-children-in-wales-have-a-family-holiday-during-term-time>

This e-petition is erroneous, in that it seeks to overturn legislation which is not in place. The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 give schools their discretionary power to grant up to 10 days absence for the purpose of an annual family holiday during term time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Huw Lewis'.

Huw Lewis AC / AM

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