

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 and P-04-606
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/02362/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

15 December 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter, dated 3 December, following your review of evidence at Petitions Committee on holidays in term time in Wales.

I am pleased to see that we are in agreement on the principles, and the interpretation of the law, in respect of parents taking their children on holiday in term time.

As you will know, I have been very clear about my position on the implementation of the Regulations and am concerned at the additional information that you have now provided. Based on the examples you have provided, there appear to be continuing issues around interpretation of the Regulations which needs to be addressed, as you suggest, with some urgency. I have therefore written to all Directors of Education in Wales – and regional education consortia – asking for their personal assurance that the arrangements are being implemented fairly and to provide my officials with evidence to support that. We will undertake an analysis of the information as soon as it is received from local authorities.

I will also be writing to all head teachers and Chairs of Governors in Wales, supported by guidance through Frequently Asked Questions, early in the New Year to ensure that schools are clear about how the arrangements need to operate.

Your letter also raised the potential impact that these arrangements might have on parents receiving fines due to the misapplication of the regulations. As you appreciate, it is for local authorities and their legal teams to ensure they are compliant with the regulations. Similarly, it is for the judicial system to decide whether parents have been dealt with fairly and lawfully.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Huw.Lewis@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The 'guidance on penalty notices for regular non-attendance at school' advises that all school attendance policies include information on issuing penalties and that it is brought to the attention of parents. In doing so parents should be aware of their right to challenge.

I have attached a copy of the letter that has issued to local authorities and regional consortia for your information.

Yours sincerely

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

Huw Lewis AC / AM

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