

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 & P-04-606
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/00154/16

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

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

2 February 2016

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 27 January following the Petitions Committee's latest consideration on holidays in term time.

I am very grateful for the Committee's continued interest in ensuring that we maintain high levels of school attendance so that we give our children and young people the very best chance of achieving their full potential. I know you will agree it provides an essential foundation for improving learning and attainment.

Having received responses from all local authorities I am considering what further action might be required in light of our recent work with them. The additional information that you have passed on from the petitioners is helpful and we will of course bear it in mind when we are considering how we might strengthen arrangements for pupil attendance.

I should though take this opportunity to clarify a point of accuracy. The petitioner has made reference to persistent absence thresholds. The figures provided relate only to England. The persistent absence threshold in Wales is 20%. We all have a responsibility to ensure that guidance referred to is applicable to Wales. I'm sure you will agree that, on occasion, this is why some of the issues surrounding holidays in term time have arisen.

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

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Minister for Education and Skills

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.