

JEREMY QUIN MP
Member of Parliament for Horsham



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

13th February 2017

Dear Constituent,

RE: TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

Thank you for contacting me about term time holidays.

I appreciate that some parents find it difficult to have time off with their children during the holidays, and that seasonal price changes can impact heavily on family incomes.

I do sympathise with parents who wish for these reasons to take their children out of school. It is also a very hard rule to enforce – an issue on which I had personal experience as a school governor.

However the reality is that absences, however minimal, can be very disruptive for children and teachers; both of whom have to spend valuable time catching up.

I am sure parents recognise this and this – combined with the efforts of teachers, Heads and governors has seen a significant improvement in pupil attendance: almost 200,000 fewer pupils are persistently missing school than in 2010.

I personally do not wish to see this positive trend reduced by holiday-related absences, nor does the Government.

The recent High Court judgment in favour of the father who withdrew his daughter from school without gaining the required consent from the school has created confusion for parents and teachers alike. The Department for Education is supporting the appeal of this case. Unauthorised absence has a significant impact on the child's education, the teachers, and the other children in the classroom and I strongly agree that we have to be absolutely clear that attendance in school is non-negotiable.

I am confident that the law strikes the right balance between the needs of individual families to take children out of school in truly exceptional circumstances, and the need to provide the best possible education for all pupils.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Quin'.