



Billingshurst Primary School
Headteacher : Helen Williamson BSc (Hons) MA
Station Road, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9RE
Tel: 01403 782789 Fax: 01403 783124
e-mail: office@billingshurstprimary.org.uk
website: www.billingshurstprimary.org.uk

7th June 2017

Dear Parents and Carers

Supreme Court Finding regarding Definition of Regular Attendance

Many of you will be aware of the recent case when a parent from the Isle of Wight won a court ruling against a Fixed Penalty Notice he received after taking his child out of school during term time. This case was then referred to the Supreme Court and this letter is to clarify the outcome of this ruling and the school's policy.

I have attached a letter to parents from West Sussex Pupil Entitlement: Investigation department which clarifies the position from West Sussex. At Billingshurst Primary School we fully implement the law in that headteachers can only authorise absence for holiday in 'exceptional circumstances'. As is made clear in all our policy documents, there is no right to a holiday because of restrictions by employers or for cost: exceptional circumstances would refer to incidents such as illness of a relation living abroad or a parent serving in the forces home on leave; such circumstances would be rare. No absence for holiday will be agreed for any other reason as there are 13 weeks of the year you may have holidays out of term time.

The West Sussex guidance also states 'If a parent requests term time leave for a holiday and the school does not authorise it, the parents can be held accountable and the Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) team will issue a FPN if the circumstances in the referral are met; 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period'.

The FPN is given because the parent is not ensuring the regular attendance of the child according to the school policy. Our school's policy reflects the guidance of West Sussex and the law.

At BPS we have previously referred absences for a FPN once 10 sessions have been exceeded. Please note that **from September 2017** we will refer when absences reach 10 sessions, rather than exceed. If you take your child out for 5 days, you will receive a FPN. All school documents will reflect this change from September.

All requests for absence, of any kind, should be made on the Withdrawal from Learning form available on our website or at the School Office.

Yours sincerely

Helen Williamson
Headteacher



2016/17

working with

National
Literacy
Trust

