

I didn't have any leave over the school holidays, and want to take my child/ren away in term time when I have some leave. Can I take them out of school, and how do I go about it?

In the first instance contact the head teacher of the school. Welsh government guidance [here](#) advises that head teachers have the discretion to authorise up to 10 days leave per academic year. This is called authorised absence, but it is not an automatic entitlement, and you will have to request the leave and give reasons as to why the leave must be taken in term time. The school will provide you with a form to do this. Authorised absence will be confirmed or refused by the head teacher. The overall attendance of your child/ren will be taken into consideration when deciding whether to authorise absence – if your child/ren have poor attendance, you are less likely to be granted authorised absence. More than one authorised absence of 10 school days per academic year is also unlikely to be authorised. If you want to holiday in term time just because it is cheaper, you are unlikely to be granted authorised absence.

If you take your children out of school without the permission of the head teacher, it is regarded as unauthorised absence.

I have been refused authorised absence by the head teacher – can I appeal the decision?

Talk to the head teacher. If you have been unable to take leave during the school holidays for operational reasons, explain this to the head teacher. If discussions with the head teacher are unsuccessful, you can also appeal any decision to the Chair of Governors of the school. Generally, the decision of the Chair of Governors is final. You can contact the Director of Education for the Education Department, but you may be re-directed back to the head teacher and/or Chair of Governors.

I have been refused authorised absence leave by the head teacher, but am planning on going anyway – what will happen?

Each local authority should publish a Fixed Penalty Notice Code of Conduct which will advise you as to what penalties are applicable for unauthorised absence.

Denbighshire: Code of conduct is not currently available on their website. Wayne Wheatly is the point of contact, telephone 01824 708064.

Conwy: Code of conduct is available [here](#) Angharad Williams is the point of contact, telephone 01492 575096.

Flintshire: Code of conduct is available [here](#) David Messum is the point of contact – telephone 01352 704122.

Wrexham: Code of conduct is available [here](#) Ian Roberts is the contact – [ian.roberts@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:ian.roberts@wrexham.gov.uk) telephone (switchboard) 01978 298991.

Ynys Môn: Code of conduct is not currently available on their website. The contact is Jane Marr (term time only), telephone (switchboard) 01248 750057.

Gwynedd: Code of contact is not currently available on their website. The contact is John Hughes Jones [johnhughesjones@gwynedd.gov.uk](mailto:johnhughesjones@gwynedd.gov.uk) telephone (switchboard) 01286 679467.

I have been refused authorised leave, and am still planning on taking my children away. If I receive a Fixed Penalty Notice, what do I need to do?

If you receive a Fixed Penalty Notice you will need to contact Professional Standards. This is no different to other FPN's, cautions and convictions. Professional Standards have advised that, in the case of education FPN's, each case will be determined on its own merits and the default position is that of proportionality. Unless there is evidence to indicate a significant impact upon the child's welfare (for example, (but not exclusively) a pattern of failing to engage and support in the child attending school) the Force position will be that receipt of an FPN will not result in misconduct proceedings for discreditable conduct. In deciding upon this pragmatic stance, the unique nature of policing has been considered, not least:

The operational restrictions on being able to take annual leave, which is outside the staff member's control (e.g. leave embargo for Olympics, mutual aid etc.).

The operational demand. For example, a rota of 5 people on response may mean that if you are at the bottom of the leave for roster, you may not be able to physically take leave in the 6 week school summer holiday period.

The DSL/CSL resourcing implications.

The increasing demand, shrinking resources and impact of austerity measures on the service.

By adopting this approach, the Force is not condoning the unauthorised absence of children from school but appropriately recognising the unique nature of working in a blue-light emergency services and that the ability to take leave within school holiday period may sometimes be outside the control of our staff.