**Why I’m taking my child out of school for a holiday**

This half-term, my family and I are leaving the country for a much-needed break. To save around £800, I will be taking my child out of school before the term officially ends. I have not sought permission from the head teacher. Nor will I.

[…]

Firstly, I genuinely don’t feel my child (aged 4) will be disadvantaged by one or two days out of school. Second, and controversially, I don’ t feel the school will be disadvantaged either. I know how the argument goes – if everyone behaved like me we’d be in a sorry state with half-empty classroom. But, really, would we? Aren’t those who shout the loudest about the need for attendance the ones who are rich enough for term-time holidays never to be an issue?

I do feel guilty, but only for families who don’t have the same financial resources as we do, so can’t have a holiday at all, term time or not. I can’t imagine any teacher devaluing the chance to learn a few words of a foreign language in situ, to see geology in action by playing on black sand, or start to understand basic engineering principles by looking at how planes fly. For us, the physical, intellectual and social advantages of travel would not be financially possible if we waited until the school holidays. Of course, I agree that attendance (most of the time) is vital but so is family harmony, unfrazzled parents, time to read or explore the world without the pressures of day-to-day life. Until travel companies offer more reasonable prices during school holidays, families like mine will continue to take their to take their children out of school. Perhaps we should go easy on parents who value spending time with their children in a new and stimulating environment over Ofsted attendance targets.

*Anonymous, The Guardian, 29 January 2014*