

Penalty Notice Fines for School Absence

Fines are issued in line with the National Framework for Penalty Notices. This poster explains when a fine can be issued for unauthorised absence that occurs from August 2025. Fines issued for an absence that happened from August 2024 onwards count towards the escalation process.

Per parent, per child

Penalty Notice fines will be issued to each parent, for each child who is absent. For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave will result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

Consecutive days of term time leave

Penalty Notice fines will be issued for:

- Term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days
- Or 4 days where the absence immediately precedes/includes a 5th day which is a school closure day (e.g. school holiday/INSET day/enforced closure, bank holiday etc.) or any form of absence
- Or for fewer days where this has happened before

10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period

Fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of absence in a 10 week period.

First offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance, the amount will be:
£160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.
Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance, the amount will be:
£160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.
There will be no option to pay at £80 level.

Third offence and any further offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for term time leave or irregular attendance, a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case will proceed to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2,500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate and may impact on job applications and travel abroad.

Court prosecutions

Penalty Notices will not automatically be issued. Parents are advised that where the LA considers that a Penalty Notice is not appropriate due to the level of concern about a child's absence, prosecution action may be taken.

By law, all Penalty Notice payments go to the Local Authority and not to schools.