

WHAT COULD HAPPEN IF I KEEP MY CHILD FROM SCHOOL FOR AN UNAUTHORISED REASON?

Local authorities and schools can use various legal powers if your child is missing school without a good reason. Consequences of continued absence are:

- a Parenting Order
- an Education Supervision Order
- a School Attendance Order
- a fine (sometimes known as a 'penalty notice')

WHAT EACH SANCTION MEANS

Parenting Order

A parenting order is a sanction that is decided and issued by the Magistrates court (if the local authority instigates court proceedings). This means you have to go to parenting classes. You'll also have to do what the court says to improve your child's school attendance.

Education Supervision Order

If the local authority thinks you need support getting your child to go to school but you're not co-operating, they can apply to a court for an Education Supervision Order.

A supervisor will be appointed to help you get your child into education. The local authority can do this instead of prosecuting you, or as well as.

School Attendance Order*

You'll receive a School Attendance Order if the local authority thinks your child is not getting an education.

You have 15 days to provide evidence that you've registered your child with the school listed in the order or that you're giving them [home education](#). If you do not, you could be prosecuted or given a fine.

**This is a legal proceeding instigated by the local authority and referred to the Magistrates court for their consideration.*

Penalty Notices

1st 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, paid within 28 days (reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days).

2nd Offence

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be £160 per parent, per child, paid within 28 days.

3rd Offence (and any further offences)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance, a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case may be presented straight 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, due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

Points to Note

If your child is facing barriers to school attendance due to special education needs or disabilities (SEND), schools, local authorities and wider services are required to work together to provide the right support.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action (e.g. a parenting order or prosecution) will be considered.

Prosecution

You could get a court fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court can also impose a Parenting Order following a successful prosecution for irregular attendance or failure to follow a School Attendance Order. A Parenting Order can also be made up to 6 months after a Parenting Contract has been entered into.

IMPROVING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT/CARER



Good attendance at school is the single most important factor in ensuring that children and young people have the best opportunities in adult life.

How parents/carers can help their child have good attendance?

- From starting at nursery, make sure your child arrives at school on time, every day.
- Encourage your child to take part in school activities and ensure that they understand the importance of being there every day.
- Don't let your child take time off school for minor ailments – particularly those which would not stop you from going to work.
- Where possible, make appointments after school, at weekends or during school holidays.
- Remember, a morning appointment does not mean a whole day of absence. Bring your child back to school in the afternoon.
- Take family holidays during school holiday time only. Schools publish term time dates well in advance – use these to plan your family holiday.
- Encourage your child to tell you about any problems they may have at school. If you know or think that your child is having difficulties attending school you should contact the school straight away.
- Find out regularly your child's attendance and absence record and check that this matches with your own records.
- Acknowledge, praise and reward good or improved attendance, even small successes.



There are 365 days in a calendar year and 175 of them are non-school days! That's plenty of time to book appointments, holidays and lots of quality family time together!

Below 90%

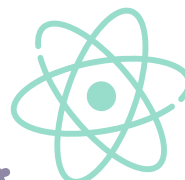
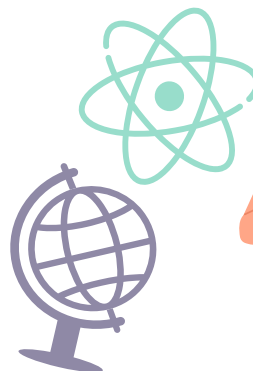
Serious impact on education and reduces life chances

90-95%

Less chance of success

96% & above

Best chance of success



But it's only a day

- ▶ **90% attendance = half day missed every week!**
- ▶ **One school year at 90% attendance = four weeks of learning missed!**
- ▶ **Over 5 years of school = half school year missed!**

All children and young people whose school attendance is 90% or below are considered to be persistent absentees.



THE IMPACT OF SCHOOL ABSENCE

- The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 have higher rates of attendance compared to those with the lowest attainment.
- At Key Stage 4 the overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grades 9-4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9-5 (8.8% absence compared to 3.7% absence).

Taken from 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance', September 2022