

School fines for unauthorised absence are changing from 19 August 2024.

You may know that the government (Department for Education) is introducing a new national framework for penalty notices which parent/carers must pay if they take a child out of school during term time. The changes will come into effect for fines issued after 19 August 2024.

How are parents fined?

If parents/carers take a child, or children, out of school for an unauthorised absence, each parent will be issued with a penalty notice fine, for each absent child.

For example: two siblings absent for leave during term time would mean that each parent will receive two separate fines.

What will happen the first time?

The first time a penalty notice is issued for term time leave or unauthorised absence the amount will be £160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.

The amount is reduced to £80 per parent, per child if the fine is paid within 21 days.

What will happen a second time? (within three years)

If parents/carers take a child, or children out of school for a second time a penalty notice will be issued for £160 per parent, per child and paid within 28 days. There is no reduction for prompt payment.

How many days does the government count as an unauthorised absence?

Penalty notice fines will be issued for term time leave or unauthorised absence of five or more days (10 sessions), in a 10 week school period.

What happens if parents don't pay the fine?

If parents/carers do not pay the fine within the timescales, the council may refer the case to the Magistrates Court for non-school attendance proceedings under the Education Act 1996 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

What happens after a third time? (within three years)

If parents/carers are issued with a penalty notice a third time for either term time leave or unauthorised absence the case will be presented directly to the Magistrates' Court and a fine of up to £2,500 can be issued.

We urge parents/carers not to interrupt their children's schooling and talk to their head teacher before requesting leave of absence.

**For more information,
please visit the government website or scan the QR code
education.welfare@rochdale.gov.uk**

