# UK parents pay £41 million in fines for taking children out of school during term time



Since 2022, UK parents have collectively paid approximately £41 million in fines for taking their children out of school during term time, according to new research from Confused.com. The data, gathered through Freedom of Information requests to local education authorities in England and Wales, reveals that over 873,000 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued for unauthorised school absences during this period.

The majority of these fines were issued in England, with 873,062 handed out, compared to just 2,762 in Wales. As of August 2025, parents who take their children out of school during term time face fines of up to £160 per parent for each child. If the fine is not paid within 28 days, councils may pursue legal action.

Despite the financial penalties, many families continue to opt for off-peak holidays during term time to save on travel costs. Confused.com reported that one in four parents has received a fine for this reason, while nearly 17 per cent have been warned. On average, parents save £567 by travelling in term time rather than during peak summer school holidays. Some families even reported savings exceeding £1,000.

A OnePoll survey conducted in April 2025 among 1,200 UK parents of children aged 16 or younger highlighted that nearly two in five parents with an unauthorised absence admitted to taking their child on holiday during term time. Over half (56 per cent) cited cheaper travel prices as the primary motivation. Furthermore, 86 per cent of parents said they would consider taking their child out of school for a holiday depending on the child’s age.

Local councils have collected significant sums from these penalties. Essex, for example, has issued 35,605 fines, cumulatively raising more than £2 million. Meanwhile, Bradford City Council issued 35,023 fines amounting to £1.8 million in penalties since 2022.

Alvaro Iturmendi, a travel insurance expert from Confused.com, highlighted the risks: “Councils can take legal action if absences happen repeatedly during term time, so while the savings could seem worth it, the consequences could be far more severe than you realise.” He explained that fines are issued per parent and per child, which can quickly multiply: “A £60 fine could double to £120 for a two-parent household, and even more if you have multiple children.”

The issue underscores the ongoing tension between families seeking affordable travel options and local authorities enforcing school attendance policies. The findings from Confused.com’s research emphasise both the financial impact on parents and the significant revenue generated through fines by local councils in England and Wales.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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