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Academic year 2024/25

Parental responsibility measures

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This release includes information on parental responsibility measures for attendance in England, used by schools and local authorities to improve poor attendance in schools.

The publication includes data on:

- penalty notices
- attendance case management
- parenting orders and parenting contracts
- education supervision orders.

The data is collected from local authorities in England through the parental responsibility measures attendance census.

This data covers the 2024/25 academic year and therefore relates to the first year after the changes introduced through the new National Framework for Penalty Notices came into effect on 19 August 2024. Further information on this change, and historic changes, are included in the [methodology](#).

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Headline facts and figures - 2024/25

Total number of penalty notices (PNs) for unauthorised absences issued

492,825

in 2024/25 academic year. Increased from 487,344 in 2023/24.

► [What are penalty notices?](#)

Main reason for issue: Unauthorised family holiday absence

459,288

in 2024/25 academic year. Increased from 443,322 in 2023/24

► [What are penalty notices for holiday absence?](#)

There were 492,800 penalty notices issued for unauthorised absence in the 2024/25 academic year, an increase of 1% from 487,300 in the previous year. This increase in the number of penalty notices issued continues the upward trend which started before the pandemic.

459,300 (93%) of penalty notices issued were due to unauthorised family holidays, 1,400 (0.3%) were issued for being late and the remainder were issued for 'other' unauthorised circumstances.

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Penalty notices

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What are penalty notices?

Penalty notices are issued to parents for failing to ensure that their child attends school.

The amount payable in 2024/25 was £80 if paid within 21 days of receipt rising to £160 if paid after 21 days. If the penalty is not paid within 28 days, the local authority must either prosecute for the original offence or withdraw the notice. Any second notice issued to a parent in respect of the same child in a 3 year rolling period is charged at a standard rate of £160.

The number of penalty notices issued has continued to increase

492,800 penalty notices were issued in 2024/25, up from 487,300 in 2023/24. This represents a small increase of 1% compared to last year and continues the year-on-year upward trend.

A new [National Framework for Penalty Notices \(opens in new tab\)](#) was introduced in 2024/25. This includes a standard threshold when a penalty notice should be considered; previously each local authority set their own policy. Since then some local authorities have had considerable changes in the numbers of penalty notices issued.

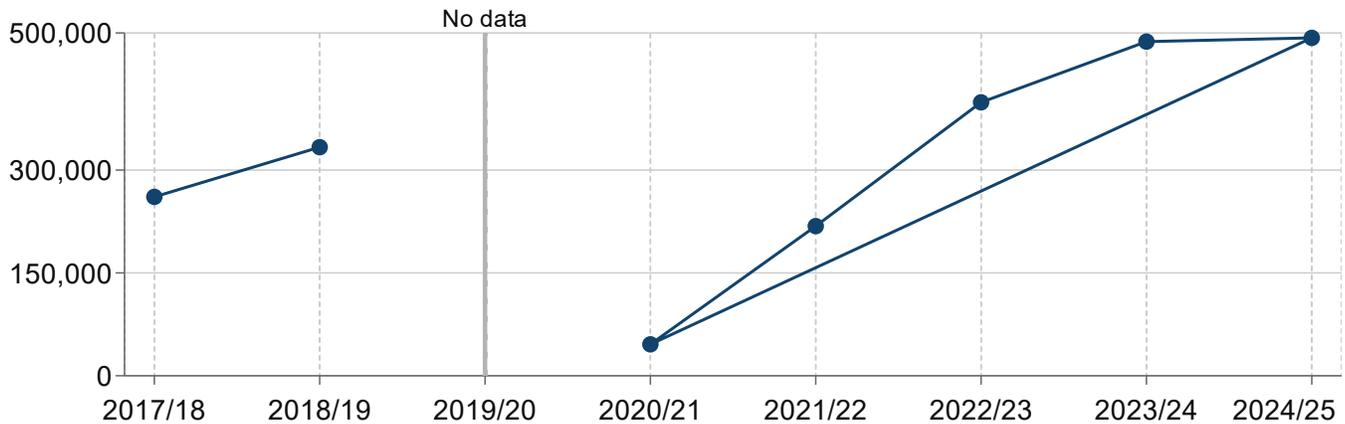
Figures for 2020/21 and 2021/22 should be treated with caution when comparing to other years. During these years, attendance at school was heavily disrupted, and for two months in 2020/21 measures were disapplied when schools were not open to all pupils. No data was collected for 2019/20. Further information can be found in the [methodology](#).

Chart

Table

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Number of penalty notices in England between 2017/18 and 2024/25



Footnotes

1. Data for 2019/20 is not available as the data collection did not take place due to the pandemic.
2. Data for 2020/21 includes a period of two months where measures were disapplied. See publication text or methodology for more information.

Source: Parental responsibility measures attendance census

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More than 9 in 10 penalty notices are issued for unauthorised family holidays

The majority of penalty notices, 459,300 (93%), were issued for unauthorised family holidays. This is an increase of 16,000 (4%) compared to the previous year.

1,400 penalty notices (0.3%) were issued for being late and the remaining 32,100 (7%) were issued for other unauthorised circumstances, an increase of 300 (31%) and decrease of 10,800 (25%) compared to the previous year, respectively.

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Penalty notices by main reason in England between 2018/19 and 2024/25

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Main reason for issue: Unauthorised family holiday absence	288,239	x	34,933	186,281	356,181	443,322
Main reason for issue: Arriving late	1,164	x	82	1,269	985	1,086
Main reason for issue: Absence due to other unauthorised circumstances	43,985	x	10,794	30,685	41,630	42,936

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Footnotes

1. Data for 2019/20 is not available as the data collection did not take place due to

the pandemic.

2. Data for 2020/21 includes a period of two months where measures were disappplied. See publication text or methodology for more information.

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Source: Parental responsibility measures attendance census

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Geographic variation in rates of penalty notices issued has narrowed but remains high

In 2024/25, the region with the highest rate of penalty notices issued was Yorkshire and The Humber, at 10.3% of pupil enrolments, representing a slight decrease from last year. London was the region with the lowest rate at 3.6%, a slight increase from last year.

Although the rate of penalty notices continued to vary considerably across local authorities, the overall range narrowed this year. In 2023/24 rates ranged from 0% to 19.5%, compared with a smaller range of 0% to 17.1% in 2024/25, the first year of the national framework.

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Attendance case management, parenting contracts, parenting orders and education supervision orders

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What is attendance case management?

Attendance case management involves a pupil specific approach to tackle absence problems. Following the introduction of [Working together to improve school attendance \(opens in new tab\)](#) from September 2022, local authorities should use this category to record any support work with pupils and parents expected by the new guidance. Depending on available data, this can include both: any early intervention work with pupils and parents, including cases where the local authority has worked with the school to support a pupil (but not been the lead practitioner), and also cases where a local authority team has held the case as the lead practitioner. Each case recorded should represent a specific agreed approach to tackle a pupil's absence problems (whether authorised or unauthorised).

From 2016/17, data has been collected on all attendance case management rather than just fast-track cases, therefore numbers from 2016/17 onwards are not directly comparable to earlier data. Fast-track is one example of attendance case management which sets out actions and a period for improving a child's attendance.

Local authorities record and collect different data on support, therefore, figures at local authority level are not directly comparable. For more information, refer to the [Parental responsibility measures: methodology](#).

Use of attendance case management increased in 2024/25

87,900 cases went through attendance case management in the 2024/25 academic year. Of those, 46% of cases were withdrawn prior to prosecution. In 2023/24 there were 80,100 cases and 42% were withdrawn before prosecution.

What are parenting contracts?

Parenting contracts are voluntary but formal written agreements between parents and the local authority or the governing body of a school. They contain a statement by the parents agreeing to comply with the requirements of the contract, and a statement by the local authority or governing body agreeing to provide support to parents for the purpose of complying with the

contract.

The number of parenting contracts decreased in 2024/25

14,200 parenting contracts were offered in 2024/25. Of these, 7,900 were accepted (55%). 61 local authorities offered parenting contracts in 2024/25.

In 2023/24 there were 14,900 parenting contracts offered, of which 11,200 were accepted (75%).

What are parenting orders?

Parenting orders are issued by courts following prosecution for unauthorised absence. They include a requirement for parents to attend counselling or guidance sessions and to comply with specified requirements.

Most local authorities did not grant any parenting orders

29 parenting orders were granted in 2024/25, in 11 local authorities. In 2023/24 there were 40 parenting orders.

What are education supervision orders?

Local authorities must consider applying for an Education Supervision Order (ESO) before prosecuting parents. A local authority may apply for an ESO instead of or as well as prosecuting parents. The order is made in respect of the child and the local authority is appointed by the court to supervise that child's education, either at a school or at home, for a specified period of time.

Most local authorities did not issue any Education Supervision Orders

52 ESOs were issued in 2024/25, in 8 local authorities. In 2023/24 the number of ESOs issued was 30.

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Attendance case management, parenting contracts, parenting orders, ESO in England between 2018/19 and 2024/25

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Total number of cases of attendance case management	82,147	x	39,712	68,176	77,106	80,065
Number of parenting contracts offered	18,254	x	7,809	14,853	13,564	14,917
Number of parenting orders made by the courts	117	x	8	38	30	40
Total number of education supervision orders issued	34	x	17	33	46	30

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Footnotes

1. Data for 2019/20 is not available as the data collection did not take place due to the pandemic.
2. Data for 2020/21 includes a period of two months where measures were disapplied. See publication text or methodology for more information.

Source: Parental responsibility measures attendance census

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About the data in this release

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Further data

Further data at regional and local authority level is available in the underlying data using the options in 'Explore data and files used in this release'.

Data quality

School attendance was significantly disrupted in the 2020/21 academic year. As such all figures for that year should be treated with caution when comparing to other years. The pandemic also had significant impacts on the ability to travel and on tourism in general, affecting the number of penalty notices issued for unauthorised holidays. Further information can be found in the [methodology](#).

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Methodology

Find out how and why we collect, process and publish these statistics.

[Parental responsibility measures](#)

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Email: schools.statistics@education.gov.uk

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