

School attendance and absence

You must make sure your child gets a full-time education that meets their needs (for example if they have special educational needs). You can send your child to school or [educate them yourself](#).

Children must get an education between the school term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June in the school year they turn 16.

You'll be contacted by either:

- the school - if your child is enrolled in school and doesn't turn up (even if they're only absent for a day)
- the council's education welfare officer - if they think your child isn't getting a suitable education at home

You can be prosecuted if you don't give your child an education. You'll normally get warnings and offers of help from the local council first.

You can [get education and attendance information from your council](#).

When your child can miss school

You can only allow your child to miss school if either:

- they're too ill to go in
- you've got advance permission from the school

There's [extra support available](#) if your child can't go to school for long periods because of a health problem.

Holidays in term time

You have to get permission from the head teacher if you want to take your child out of school during term time.

You can only do this if:

- you make an application to the head teacher in advance (as a parent the child normally lives with)
- there are exceptional circumstances

It's up to the head teacher how many days your child can be away from school if leave is granted.

You can be fined for taking your child on holiday during term time without the school's permission.

School trips

Your child's school can ask you for a voluntary contribution to the cost of activities like school trips. They can't stop your child from attending if you don't pay, but they should cancel the activity if there isn't enough money to cover the cost of it.