

Thrive Independent School



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date of Issue: June 2025

Why do we exist?

Provide students the opportunity to re-engage in learning. Champion individual pathways to success, fostering confidence, building resilience and developing the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in their next steps of life.

How do we behave?

Work hard. Respect. Grow

What do we do?

We establish high-performing alternative provisions, which maximise attainment in core areas, value diversity, develop character and build cultural capital.

How Will Students Thrive?

Attendance: Students guided and supported to attend Thrive for full time education.

Curriculum: Access a curriculum which matches abilities of our learners.

Pathways: Aim to provide students with a successful pathway back to mainstream education and further careers.

Introduction

All children of school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability or any special need they may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them. Thrive Independent School takes the responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its pupils very seriously. It acknowledges that irregular attendance can disrupt continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement/low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within the school.

We feel the whole school community should take responsibility for attendance. Therefore, this policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed.

School Attendance Vision

At Thrive Independent School, we believe that excellent attendance is essential for successful outcomes. Where pupils' absence becomes greater than the minimum threshold of 5%, we have a duty to investigate the underlying reasons for absence and to take action.

Thrive Independent School aims to maintain the highest possible overall percentage attendance and punctuality, and to minimise unauthorised absence; create an environment where students are excited to learn and attend regularly; ensure that all staff, students, and parents understand the role of excellent attendance and punctuality in keeping children safe; put in place an effective system for monitoring and offering support; and establish excellent routines of attendance and punctuality to enhance future opportunities and emotional well-being.

The Law

Children aged 5-16 should attend school regularly. The school keeps an admissions register and an attendance register, which are called twice a day. The register must show whether the student is present, engaged in approved educational activity, off-site or absent, and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Registers are legal documents. Staff must mark registers accurately. Parents/Carers must ensure their child attends regularly and on time. Students should arrive by 9am. The school day ends at 3pm

Expectations

Good attendance and punctuality depend on a partnership among pupils, parents/carers, the school, and outside bodies. Pupils are expected to attend daily, arrive by 9am, attend lessons punctually, and catch up on missed work.

Parents are expected to ensure regular attendance, timely arrival, notify absences by 8:00am, ensure correct uniform and equipment, arrange appointments outside school time, avoid booking holidays during term, communicate concerns, and keep contact details up to date.

Thrive Independent School staff are expected to emphasise the importance of attendance, register attendance accurately using Bromcom, contact parents when pupils are absent, invite parents for discussions on frequent absence, notify the DSL if concerned, promote attendance based on individual needs, cooperate with external agencies, provide attendance reports, set targets, and reward positive attendance.

Every School Day Counts

Although being absent cannot always be helped as we all do become ill from time to time, please take a look at the table below to show you exactly how much time your child could be missing.

365 Days in a Year	190 School Days in Total	Absence
100% Attendance	190 Days	0
95% Attendance	180 Days	2 Weeks
90% Attendance	171 Days	4 Weeks
85% Attendance	161 Days	6 Weeks
80% Attendance	152 Days	More than half a term
75% Attendance	143 Days	9+ Weeks

If a child achieves 80% attendance this means that they have missed approximately 40 days of education over the academic year, averaging 1 day per week. This clearly has a detrimental impact on a child's education and life.

Attendance Monitoring and Interventions

Creating a pattern of regular attendance is a shared responsibility. Attendance data is tracked from the start of the year and across half terms to monitor and reward improvements or intervene swiftly.

Staff must mark registers accurately and notify parents of concerns. The Attendance Officer oversees register maintenance, authorises absences with evidence, communicates with parents, prioritises contact with vulnerable students, enforces interventions for lateness, enters appointments in the register, provides updates and analyses to tutors and Heads of Year, and praises improved attendance.

Tutors/Heads of Year remind students to bring absence notes, discuss concerns with students and parents, and praise good attendance. Pastoral leaders monitor tutors, follow up with students whose attendance doesn't improve, and review actions. Senior Leaders chair meetings, oversee interventions, support with meetings and home visits.

Positive Reinforcement

To promote attendance, the school uses rewards such as weekly class rewards, half-termly rewards for 100% attendance, and recognition during celebration assemblies. Pupil absence data resets each half term.

Monitoring Processes

Pupil registers are completed by 9am. overall attendance data is shared by 09:15. Absent pupils are contacted and registers updated by 10am. Attendance is monitored in pastoral meetings weekly or fortnightly, and reviewed half-termly, especially for persistently or severely absent students.

Intervention Processes

At 5% absence, tutors support improvement. At 10% absence, Heads of Year provide added support. At 11%-45%, pupils become Persistent Absentees and receive an Absence Action Plan. At 50% or more, students are considered Severe Absentees, are referred to the Education Welfare Service, and may trigger legal intervention or safeguarding referral.

Guidelines

Each half-day absence must be recorded as authorised or unauthorised by the school. Parents must provide information on absences and evidence when required. Authorised absences include sickness, hospital appointments, religious holidays, and funerals. Unauthorised absences include shopping, family visits, and holidays taken in term time. If a child is reluctant to attend, parents should contact the school, not excuse or conceal the absence.

Holidays/Trips

Parents must not book holidays in term time. A Term Time Absence Request form must be completed. Penalty Notices may be issued for unauthorised absences. Staff may raise safeguarding concerns for absences under certain conditions.

Action taken when pupils are absent

Parents should inform the school of absence by 8:00am. Evidence of illness (e.g., prescriptions) should be provided. Absence without explanation leads to contact by phone or email. Recurrent unexplained medical absences may lead to contact with a GP. Long-term medical conditions are managed with external agencies and possible phased returns. Home visits are conducted after three days of absence.

Lateness

The school day starts at 9am. Pupils arriving late must use the Reception Gate. Registers close at 08:50. Pupils arriving after 9:15am receive an unauthorised absence. Consistent lateness is addressed similarly to absence, potentially involving the Education Welfare Officer.

Every Minute Counts

As well as being absent a lot from school effecting your child's development, being late also has a big effect on their learning time, please look at the table below:

Lateness = Lost Learning (figures below are calculated over the school year)	
5 mins late each day	3 days lost
10 mins late each day	6.5 days lost
15 mins late each day	10 days lost
20 mins late each day	13 days lost
30 mins late each day	19 days lost

Pupil absence and extenuating family circumstance

There is no automatic right to term-time absence. Unauthorised absence may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice. A meeting will be held, and safeguarding protocols will be followed if needed.

The Attendance Service

Parents are encouraged to resolve attendance issues early. If unsuccessful, the case is referred to the Education Welfare Service. Persistent unauthorised absences may lead to legal action.

Children who are absent from Education

Repeated or prolonged absences may signal safeguarding issues. From the first day of unexplained absence, contact is made and concerns assessed. Referrals to social care or police are made where necessary. Reasonable enquiry includes contacting staff, friends, relatives, phone numbers, letters, home visits, and database checks.

Children absent for more than four weeks require a Deletion Notice before removal from the register. The school must notify the local authority if a child is removed for specific reasons (e.g., home education, relocation, exclusion, custody).

Registers

Registers are legal documents and must be completed at the start of each session. Staff must complete them promptly. Late arrivals are marked appropriately, and registers are updated by the attendance team.

Telephone Numbers/Contact Details

Parents must provide three up-to-date contact numbers. These are regularly checked.

Department for Education Targets

The Department for Education's guidance "Working Together to Improve Attendance" (August 2024) outlines how families, schools, and agencies can collaborate to ensure excellent attendance and improved educational outcomes and enabling them to flourish.

Appendix 1: Application For Leave of Absence During Term Time

(see separate page)

Appendix 2: Statutory Register Codes From 19th August 2024

Code	Description	Statistical Treatment
/\	Present at school (/ = morning, \ = afternoon)	Attending
L	Late arrival before register closed	Attending
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Educational activity
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Educational activity
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Educational activity
W	Attending work experience	Educational activity
B	Attending other approved educational activity	Educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school	Educational activity
C1	Leave for participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	Authorised absence
M	Medical or dental appointment	Authorised absence
J1	Interview for employment or admission to education	Authorised absence
S	Studying for a public examination	Authorised absence
X	Non-compulsory school age, not required to attend	Not possible attendance
C2	Leave for part-time timetable for compulsory school age pupil	Authorised absence
C / C0	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances	Authorised absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised absence
E	Suspended or permanently excluded, no alternative provision	Authorised absence
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Not possible attendance
Y1	Transport not available	Not possible attendance
Y2	Widespread travel disruption	Not possible attendance
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Not possible attendance
Y4	Whole school site closed unexpectedly	Not possible attendance
Y5	In criminal justice detention	Not possible attendance
Y6	Following public health guidance or law	Not possible attendance
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	Not possible attendance
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Unauthorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent for unknown/other reasons	Unauthorised absence
U	Arrived after registration closed	Unauthorised absence
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Not collected
#	Planned whole school closure	Not collected

APPENDIX 3: Penalty notice fines for school attendance changed on Monday 19th August 2024

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes came into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024.

Per Parent, Per Child First Offence

Penalty Notice Fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines — 6 fines total for the family.

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

- £160 per parent, per child within 28 days
- Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days

5 Cumulative days of term time leave

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more cumulative days. Inset training days are school days and can be included in the 5+ days where there was intent to be absent for term time leave.

10 Sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

Second Offence (within a 3-year rolling period)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance, the amount will be:

- £160 per parent, per child within 28 days

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within a 3-year rolling period)

The third time an offence is committed for term time leave or irregular attendance, a Penalty Notice will not be issued. Instead, the case will go straight to the Magistrates' Court.

- Magistrates' fines can be up to £2,500 per parent, per child
- Cases found guilty in court may appear on the parent's future DBS certificate as "failure to safeguard a child's education"