



Thrive CE Trust – Attendance Policy



Aims

All Thrive CE Academy Trust Schools are committed to promoting a whole-school culture that values excellent attendance, by:

- Promoting excellent attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education, to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

Our staff, Trustees and Governors are united in their belief that regular school attendance enables children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Excellent attendance helps children to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community; utilising their God-given talents.

Thrive CE Trust values all children. We work with families to identify the barriers to achieving and maintaining excellent attendance and offer the right services, at the right time, to resolve difficulties. Each school is asked to appoint a **Senior Attendance Champion** who is responsible for monitoring daily and weekly attendance to identify any patterns of concern, whilst also celebrating success.

Attendance concerns will be raised with parents (when reasons are not known by the school). This information may also be shared with the Trust or Local Authority. Where we have concerns, or there is a lack of engagement from families to improve attendance, we will follow the school's staged approach to improving attendance.

Our Trust's staged approach is child-centred and prioritises support and developing strong working relationships with families. We will use the Early Help process to provide support prior to escalation and consider how we can work with families to enable children to access their right to education.

Attendance figures for each child will be reported to parents each half term in the form of number of days/sessions missed as well as over percentage attendance. Parents can also access their child's live attendance figure, at any time, by contacting the school office.

Every half term, the Senior Attendance Champion will meet with Thrive's Central Team to discuss current attendance figures, as well as the figures for specific groups. Thrive will set challenging, yet achievable targets for attendance for each school and will have access to live attendance data via the shared Management Information System.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments) The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

Roles and Responsibilities

Each School's **Governing Board** is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance through the implementation of school policies
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher/Head of School to account for the implementation of this policy

The **Executive Headteacher/Headteacher/Head of School** is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Reporting unauthorised absences to the relevant Local Authority for consideration of fixed-penalty notices.

The **Senior Attendance Champion** is responsible for:

- Overseeing attendance and punctuality across the school
- Working to deliver the Trust's vision for good attendance.
- Having a clear oversight of the latest attendance data and comparisons with school targets.
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to senior leaders/Headteacher
- Ensuring the strategies outlined in this policy are implemented consistently and the impact measured regularly.
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Ensuring targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis and submitting this information to the School Office by the agreed statutory time each morning and afternoon.

School Office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absences on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Be aware of the children for whom attendance or punctuality is a concern and direct calls from parents to senior staff.

- Ensure that 'First Call' is completed by 10:30 each morning for those children whose absence is unexplained and 9:15 for those pupils whose attendance is a concern. They will inform the Headteacher/Senior leader if contact has not been made and escalate this accordingly to ensure a child is not missing from education.

Parents and Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school on time every day.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am. This must be completed on every day of the child's absence
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

If a school has not been notified of a reason for absence, and is unable to contact the parent or carer, a visit to the home will be arranged to ensure the safety and well-being of the pupil. Visits will also be made to those children whose attendance is a concern.

Recording Attendance

Attendance register:

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment See Appendix One for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made. Pupils must arrive at school by the time published by each Academy. The register will be kept open for no longer than 30 minutes from the official start time of the school day.
- The second registration will take place at the start of the afternoon session.

Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent or carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09:00 or as soon as practically possible by calling the School Office.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent or carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents and carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent or carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late, after the register has closed, will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

Following up Unexplained Absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent or carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Call the parent or carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving Multi- Agency Safeguarding Services.

If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will make a Home Visit (consisting of two members of school staff). If they are not able to make contact with the parent or child at the home address or via telephone, the Police will be contacted and a request will be made for them to complete a 'Safe and Well Check'

Reporting to Parents and Carers

The school will regularly inform parents and carers about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will be done each half term.

Parents can access their child's live attendance figure at any time by contacting the schools office.

Where a pupil is persistently absent, severely absent or has an attendance figure below our aspiration of 96%, communication will be made from the school at the end of every half term. This may be via a written letter or invitation to attend an in-person meeting, depending on the context behind each absence.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Leave of Absence

The law states a leave of absence may only be granted by a school if an application is made in advance and if it considers there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Expectations

- A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Permission for a Leave of Absence from a school may only be given by a person who the school's proprietor has authorised to do so (an authorised person).
- Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request.
- Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.
- Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.
- When making an application for Leave of Absence parents are advised to give sufficient information and time to allow the Head teacher the opportunity to consider all the exceptional circumstances and to notify the parents of their decision. The school may also request further information on the application and supporting documentation where appropriate.
- It is advised that if the resident parent has not received notification or a response regarding the leave of absence application, it is their responsibility to ascertain if the leave is authorised prior to the start of the leave.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Where applications for Leave of Absences are made in advance and refused, the child is expected to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an "unauthorised" absence. Where a leave of absence is requested but additional days take either prior to or after the request, they may be considered as part of the leave of absence. Leave of Absences which are not made in advance cannot be authorised in line with legislation. This will result in the absence being recorded as 'unauthorised'.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Attendance Service of the relevant Local Authority. Penalty notices are issued in accordance with each council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices and in the first instance, as an alternative to prosecution proceedings.
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to the relevant council's legal services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Leave of Absence taken in the Academic Year 2025-26

The law relating to Penalty Notices changed with effect from 19 August 2024. Therefore, Penalty Notices issued for Leave of Absence will now be issued in accordance with the updated legislation.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices – 4 in total).

First Leave of Absence Offence: The amount of £160 to be paid within 28 days, this is reduced to £80 each child if paid within 21 days.

Second Leave of Absence Offence within a 3-year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice): The amount of £160 paid within 28 days. No reduced amount.

Third Leave of Absence offence within a 3-year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice). A Penalty Notice will not be issued and the matter will be referred to Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Education for Pupils Unable to Attend School (Section 19 Duty)

In line with **Section 19 of the Education Act 1996**, Thrive CE Trust schools will ensure that pupils who cannot attend school because of illness, exclusion, or other reasons continue to receive suitable education.

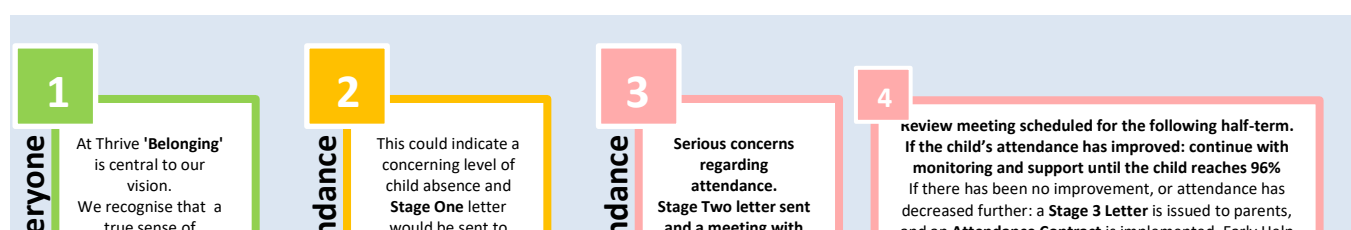
- **Notification to Local Authority:**
If a pupil is expected to miss **15 or more school days** (consecutive or cumulative) due to health needs or other circumstances, the school will notify the Local Authority immediately.
- **Collaboration:**
The school will work with the Local Authority, parents, and other agencies to arrange appropriate provision (e.g., home tuition, hospital school, or alternative provision).
- **Attendance Recording:**
Where education is provided off-site under Section 19, the school will record attendance using the appropriate DfE code (e.g., **Code K** for LA-arranged provision).
- **Monitoring and Review:**
The Senior Attendance Champion will monitor these cases and ensure regular reviews with families and the Local Authority to support reintegration into full-time education wherever possible.

Attendance Monitoring

At Thrive CE Trust, we implement a staged approach to promote excellent attendance for every pupil. Our staged approach is underpinned by **six principles**:

1. **Expect:** a culture where all children can, and want, to be in school.
2. **Monitor:** analyse attendance data weekly to identify patterns of poor attendance or areas of concern.
3. **Listen and Understand:** working alongside parents to understand their barriers to attendance; work together to remove them.
4. **Facilitate Support:** empower parents by supporting them to access external support to overcome barriers outside of school.
5. **Formalise Support:** this could include formalising support through a Parenting Contract or Education Supervision Order.
6. **Enforce:** statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the child's right to an education. This stage will only be implemented when all previous stages of the approach have been exhausted and there is no other option.

Thrive CE Academy Trust's Staged Approach: Ensuring Excellent Attendance for All



Monitoring Attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Analysing Attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly (weekly) to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

Using Data to Improve Attendance

The **Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance** will:

- Provide regular (weekly) attendance reports to Class Teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents and carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Communicate persistent or severe absence concerns with parents every half term. This may be via a written letter or invitation to attend an in-person meeting, dependent on the context behind each absence.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trust Board.

Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Appendix One: Attendance Codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open

Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

1

Everyone

At Thrive, **'Belonging'** is central to our vision. We recognise that a true sense of Belonging, enables a child to embark on a life-long journey of **'Believing'** which enables them to **'Become'** the person they want to be and flourish in life. Our schools strive to create a welcoming environment where children thrive and achieve well through excellent attendance.

2

Below 96% Attendance

This could indicate a concerning level of child absence and **Stage One** letter would be sent to parents. Personalised **communication** with families and bespoke **support** to help improve levels of attendance. Close **monitoring**, regular **dialogue** and specific **strategies** put into place to support attendance to rise above 96%

3

Below 90% Attendance

Serious concerns regarding attendance. **Stage Two** letter sent and a meeting with the Headteacher arranged. Meetings to explore barriers and implement a programme to remove them. Early Help support to be reviewed or offered.

4

Review meeting scheduled for the following half-term. If the child's attendance has improved, continue with monitoring and support until the child reaches 96%. If there has been no improvement, or attendance has decreased further: a **Stage 3 Letter** is issued to parents, and an **Attendance Contract** is implemented. Early Help support to be reviewed or offered. Continued implementation of internal and external support.

5

Review meeting: If there has been no improvement, Attendance contract to be reviewed as well as all support currently in place. If all avenues have been exhausted and support is not working, the school will enforce attendance through statutory intervention. The child and family will continue to receive support throughout this process.

