



02 October 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Attendance Update**

We would like to share some important updates regarding our approach to attendance at Thistley Hough Academy. We are committed to providing the very best support to empower our children to attend school regularly and overcome any potential barriers they may face in their educational journey.

Our approach is rooted in an inclusive attendance model designed to ensure that everyone - our staff, families, and children - fully understands their individual roles and collective responsibilities in supporting school attendance, active engagement in learning, and addressing potential barriers.

Effective communication with all our families is central to our values at Thistley Hough Academy. In light of this, we will transition from reporting attendance in percentage form to a focus on the number of days missed. This shift will simplify the process, improve communication, and help all children and families have a clear understanding of the impact of missed school days on education.

Our renewed focus will ultimately help us create a culture where everyone at Thistley Hough Academy shares the collective responsibility for school attendance.

In August 2024 the Department for Education implemented new legislation on school attendance. To ensure you are fully aware of the impact school absence will have on you and your family we have included the following in this letter.

- Information on the fines that will be issued by the Local Authority for absence and lateness to school, including holiday absence.

At Thistley Hough Academy our main aim is to work with families to support you in removing barriers to school attendance and ensuring children have an attendance of over 97%. To discuss barriers or request support, please contact [attendance@thistleyhoughacademy.org.uk](mailto:attendance@thistleyhoughacademy.org.uk)

Yours sincerely

*P. Ingerfield-Lapsley*

Mrs Ingerfield-Lapsley  
Assistant Principal



## Department for Education Guidance

### What happens if my child misses school or is repeatedly late to school?

In the majority of cases, schools and local authorities will try and provide support to help you improve your child's attendance first, but if this isn't effective or if the absence is for unauthorised term time holiday, parents may face paying a fine.

Currently, it's the responsibility of the Local Authority to decide when to issue fines to parents.

However, under the new national framework from the Department for Education, **all schools will be required by law** to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 or more sessions for unauthorised reasons over a 10-week period.

Each day has two sessions, AM session and PM session.

Morning roll call begins at 08:20 and registration opens at 08:30. If your child is later than 09:00 this will count as a half day unauthorised absence (even if they arrive at 09:01).

From August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country will be £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days. This rate is in line with inflation and is the first increase since 2012.

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.

Money raised via fines is only used by the Local Authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

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

- They are too ill to go in.
- Have a medical appointment (however, these should be avoided during school time completely or made after 13:00 as a last resort). If a hospital appointment cannot be avoided, then evidence of the appointment will need to be provided. The appointment letter should be emailed in advance to [attendance@thistleyhoughacademy.org.uk](mailto:attendance@thistleyhoughacademy.org.uk)



# ATTENDANCE

## WHAT THE NEW RULES MEAN FOR ME

# 1

**I'm a single parent of one child and we want to go on holiday for a week.**

Your holiday will not be authorised and you must talk to the school before you book anything. Because your child will miss 5 school days you will be given a penalty notice fine. The fine is £160 but if you pay it in 21 days it will be reduced to £80.

# £160



# 2

**FOR EVERY CHILD A PENALTY IS GIVEN.**



+ £160 + £160 + £160 + £160

**4 children & 1 parent = £640**

Reduced to £320 if paid in 21 days

### IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE

# 10 IN 10

# 5

If your child is absent for 10 or more sessions in 10 weeks and their absences are unauthorised. The school will consider prosecution.

**1 Day = 2 Sessions**

# 3

### FOR A FAMILY OF TWO PARENTS



+ £160 + £160 + £160 + £160

**4 children & 2 parents = £1280**

Reduced to £640 if paid in 21 days

**If in any period of not more than 3 years, your child has a 2nd and 3rd leave of absence or pattern of irregular attendance...**

# 4

### 2ND TIME

**2 parents and**  
1 child = £320  
2 children = 640  
3 children = 960  
4 children = 1280

**No discount for early payment**



### 3RD TIME

A penalty notice fine will not be given. Instead, your case will be taken to court.

A magistrate can fine each parent £2500 for each child

**1 parent & 4 children = £10,000**  
**2 parents & 4 children = £20,000**