Purpose:
This policy outlines the aims, objectives, roles and responsibilities, absence management protocols and legal requirements. Local attendance procedures reflect this policy and provide more details about the operating model in each THPT school.

Aims and Objectives
THPT regards good student attendance as a key factor in underpinning welfare and progress. This policy will enable THPT schools to promote the importance of good attendance and challenge attendance issues. The policy safeguards the rights of pupils/students to be educated.

The aims of the policy are to:

- Promote the strong and proven links between attendance and attainment
- Promote a high standard of attendance for all students
- Ensure fairness of treatment for all to ensure the welfare of all
- Ensure that attendance issues are challenged consistently
- Encourage a positive partnership with parents
- Support pupils to maintain good attendance and punctuality, in preparation for their future, both in education and the world of work.
Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust Board will ensure the Attendance Policy reflects the ethos of THPT, establishes the policy and considers feedback on its effectiveness.

The Local Governance Board (LGB) will monitor the implementation of the policy and keep it under review, feeding back recommended changes to the Trust board. It will ensure that it is communicated to pupils/students and parents, is non-discriminatory and the expectations are clear. Local Governors will support the school in maintaining high standards of behaviour.

The Head is accountable for the implementation of the policy and will delegate the responsibility for its day-to-day management to the SLT and others.

Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed, and consistently and fairly applied. Mutual support amongst all staff in the implementation of the policy is essential. Staff have a key role in advising the Head on the effectiveness of the policy and procedures. They also have responsibility, with the support of the Head, for creating a high-quality learning environment, teaching good behaviour and implementing the agreed policy and procedures consistently. Staff have a statutory authority to impose sanctions on behalf of the school.

Pupils and students

- To aim for 100% attendance
- To be on time to school
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- Take pride in their attendance and punctuality.

Parents and carers

- Encourage their children to attend school, working in partnership with the school and ensuring their children attend school whenever possible
- Promote the link between attendance and attainment/progress
- Ensure their child arrives in school on time for registration and well prepared for the school day
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school giving details of the reason they are unable to attend
- Contact the school office or absence line regarding any unforeseen absence (e.g. illness/ family emergency), in line with the school’s attendance procedures
- As far as possible ensure that non-urgent medical or dental appointments are made outside of the school day or avoiding registration periods, in line with the school’s attendance procedures
- Avoid any term time absence requests.

Senior Leadership Team
• Monitor attendance and, where concerns are identified, consult with parents/outside agencies to agree actions to address identified issues.
• Inform local Governors of attendance data through Leadership reports.
• Inform parents of attendance percentages for their pupil/s in line with the school’s reporting procedures.
• Promote excellent attendance by pupils.
• Provide opportunities to celebrate good attendance.

Heads (or member of senior staff with responsibility for attendance)

• Consider requests for absence and meet with parents to discuss such requests, as necessary.
• Make referrals to the Local Authority for the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) where appropriate.

Class Teachers and tutors

• Take registers accurately and on time
• Report any anomalies to the school office
• Report concerns relating to attendance to the relevant members of SLT
• Promote the links between attendance and attainment/progress.

School Attendance Administrator (s)

• Ensure registers are accurate and add additional information for lateness and absences
• Support the SLT in monitoring and identifying levels of absence/lateness causing concern.

Education Welfare Officer/Inclusion Officer

• Support the school to develop strategies to meet acceptable levels of attendance.

Local Governors

• The Local Governance Board, Head and staff will ensure that there will be a consistent application of the policy and procedures which will take into account gender, race, culture & ethnicity, SEN, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and gender reassignment. Parents will be informed of the statutory nature of this policy.

Legal Requirements

• Pupils’ attendance, absence and punctuality to be recorded accurately, including those in Alternative Provision.
• Registers may be used in court proceedings for non-attendance.
• Pupils must not be allowed to take a register.
• Pupils removed from roll must be reported to the Education Welfare service.
Absence Protocols

Absence in term time

Absence from school falls into two categories, authorised and unauthorised. Absence may be authorised when a child is genuinely ill, has a hospital or other medical appointment, is visiting another school or for religious reasons. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Heads may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Absence will not be authorised in term time for scenarios such as family holidays (unless exceptional circumstances can be evidenced), birthday treats, oversleeping due to a late night or visiting relatives.

Absence in exceptional circumstances

The Head may, on occasion, make a judgement that there are genuine and exceptional circumstances pertaining to an application to take a pupil out of school during term time.

Absences at the start/end of term

If a pupil or student is absent due to illness from school on the first or last day or any term or half term, the school will require that medical evidence is provided. If this evidence is not provided, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Medical Evidence

When a pupil or student’s attendance falls below 90% or a student has several instances of illness, the School may send the parent or carer a letter requiring medical evidence for any future absences. If this evidence is not provided, then the absences will be recorded as unauthorised.

Rewarding good attendance:

Schools should reward students who consistently maintain excellent standards of attendance and those who show an improvement in their attendance.

Failure to ensure regular school attendance

THPT schools hold regular Attendance Panels, sometimes in conjunction with the EWO (Education Welfare Officer). When a pupil’s attendance is a cause for concern, parents will be invited to an Attendance Panel to discuss any difficulties they are experiencing in ensuring regular school attendance. If there is no improvement in attendance, the School may refer the matter to the EWO, who works in partnership with school and parents to support students who are failing to attend school on a regular basis. Parents have a legal duty to ensure regular attendance and if they fail to do so, may commit an offence under Sections 7 & 444 of the Education Act, 1996.
Fixed Penalty Notices for failing to ensure regular attendance at school

Only the School can authorise an absence, not the parent/carer. When a pattern of absence begins to cause concern, parents/carers will be contacted by a member of staff who will seek to work with parents/carers to resolve poor attendance. This will include considering the possibility that further absences may be deemed unauthorised. In any 6-week period, 7 sessions of unauthorised absence could result in an FPN being issued by the EWO. Each day counts as two sessions (morning and afternoon registration).

Penalty Notices for Holidays

In line with guidance from the DfE and Surrey County Council, the Head may request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice to parents when students are taken out of school for 5 or more days’ holiday or leave of absence without prior school authorisation. The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60, per child, per parent/carer if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority may prosecute parents for failure to ensure regular school attendance.

Legal Requirements

- Pupils’ attendance, absence and punctuality to be recorded accurately, including those attending Alternative Provision
- Registers may be used in court proceedings for non-attendance
- Pupils must not be allowed to take a register
- Pupils removed from roll must be reported to Education Welfare service.

A copy of Surrey County Council’s Code of Conduct for Issuing Penalty Notices can be found on their website.
Registration

Morning registration takes place at 08:45 and afternoon registration at 12:35. Students who arrive after 8:45 should sign in late in at reception and will be recorded as late to school (‘L’ mark).

Tutors will actively and accurately take a roll call at the start of each tutorial session. Tutors should mark students present (/) or absent (N) or late (L). When a student is late the number of minutes late should be recorded. A detention (15 minutes at lunchtime) should be issued for students who are late to morning or afternoon tutor.

All teaching staff should actively and accurately take a register at the start of each lesson. If a student who was present earlier in the day is absent from a lesson, the attendance office should be informed.

Students who sign in after 09:15 (with no good reason) during the morning session or after 13:05 during the afternoon session, will be recorded as an unauthorised absence for that half day.

Punctuality and Lateness

Students who are late but before 9.15 receive a lunchtime reflection (15 minutes), students who arrive after 9.15 receive an after school reflection (30 minutes).

Parents of students who are persistently late or have unauthorised absences will be contacted by their tutor or a member of the year team. Should this not resolve the situation the Attendance Manager, Year Leader or an SLT member may organise a parental meeting or a referral to the Education Welfare Service may be necessary.

Absence management process

This school operates a graduated response to absence management (see Appendix 1).

Illness Absence

Parents must contact the school office or absence answerphone line by 09:00 on the first day of any illness absence, clearly stating their child’s name, class and specific illness. If an expected return to school date is known, this should also be given. Parents must repeat this for every day of absence, unless by agreement with the school.

Medical and Dental Appointments

As far as possible, parents should ensure that non-urgent medical or dental appointments are made outside of the school day or avoiding registration periods. If possible, pupils should attend school before the appointment and return immediately afterwards. Parents must notify
the school in advance of dental and medical appointments using the form available via the school website and at the school office (see Appendix 2).

**Holiday Requests**

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and we strongly advise parents to book their family holidays during the school holidays. If a family holiday in term time is unavoidable, a request form (see Appendix 2) must be obtained from the school office and returned to the Head, one month prior to the date of departure. These will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances.

**Leave of Absence Request Forms**

Permission for leave of absence in term time can only be granted in exceptional circumstances, approved by the Head. A pro forma to apply for leave of absence is available from the school website (see Appendix 2). Where leaves of absence are taken which do not fall into the ‘exceptional circumstances’ category, these will be recorded on a child’s attendance record as ‘unauthorised absence’. When a student is absent during term time there is disruption to the learning process that can result in the student falling behind his/her learning. There is a belief, amongst some parents, that this time can be made up by the school providing ‘work’ for the student to complete during the holiday period. However, this does not have the desired effect since the student has missed out on quality teaching time. In general terms, it is our policy that it is not possible to provide a child with the work which is planned during this period of absence.

**Arriving late back from holidays**

If a student misses school because they are unable to return (owing to being stranded abroad/ delayed or missed transport/ illness whilst on holiday), evidence of the original flights being booked at a time that would have enabled the young person to be in school on time must be provided.

**Modified Timetables**

On some occasions it may be necessary to alter the times of the school day for individual students. This process should be agreed with and recorded by a member of the Pastoral Team and a copy sent to the Attendance Manager. Modified timetables need to be set for a specific amount of time and include a review date. Modified timetables must be agreed by Ms Nicholls (Deputy Headteacher – Attendance).

**Students in Alternative Provision**

Some students are educated either on a full-time or part-time basis in an alternative setting. A modified timetable must be completed and the Attendance Manager/SLT lead will liaise with the Alternative Provider to ensure that the student is attending and that the attendance is accurately recorded. This will be monitored closely by Ms Nicholls (Deputy Headteacher) and Mr Snashall (Assistant Headteacher).

**Home visits**

Year leaders and the Attendance Team will monitor registration reports and may carry home visits for students who have repeated illnesses.
Appendix 1
Attendance Action

All interventions should be recorded on school’s information management system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance Category</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Staff Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 100% & significantly improved | **Rewards**  
- Rewards at the end of each half term  
- Prize Draws  
- Celebration communication with parent/carer | Year Leads/ SLT Attendance Leads |
| Above 95%                | **Rewards**  
- Eligible for attendance mufti day  
- Celebration communication with parent/carer | Year Leads/ SLT Attendance Lead |
| 92.5-95%                 | **Tutor Attendance Monitoring Programme**  
- Discussion with student to understand barriers to attendance  
- Communication with parent/carer to discuss importance of attendance and identify any issues relating to attendance/school | Tutors  
SLT Attendance Lead |
| 90-92.5%                 | **Year Leader/ Attendance Team intervention**  
Communication with parent/carer  
Attendance Panels with attendance team/SLT  
Referral to EWO | Year Leader  
Attendance Manager  
SLT Attendance Lead  
EWO |
| 87%-90%                  | **Attendance team /SLT Lead/ EWO intervention**  
Parents/carers made aware students are PA.  
Referral to EWO (if not already referred)  
Monitored by Year Lead/Attendance Team/SLT  
Home visits by attendance team /EWO | Attendance Manager  
SLT Attendance Lead  
Year Leader  
EWO |
| Below 87%                | **SLT / EWO intervention**  
Attendance Panels with SLT/EWO  
EWO Intervention  
Attendance mentoring | EWO  
Attendance Manager  
SLT Attendance Lead  
Year Leader |
Appendix 2

Application for Leave of Absence for Exceptional Circumstances

Please read the following guidance carefully

As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child’s attendance at school. During the academic year, students are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days.

Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Please complete and submit this form if you want the Head of School to consider your request for your child’s leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. We may ask for proof to back up your request.

Unauthorised absence of 5 days or more may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice
Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority in accordance with Surrey County Council’s Code of Conduct. The Penalty Notice is £60, per child per parent/carer, if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in you being served a summons to appear at the Magistrates Court.

The Head of School will consider the reasons for the request carefully and will notify you of the decision. For further information, please refer to our School Attendance Policy.

Please return this form to School marked for the attention of Mrs K Mullen, Pastoral Manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Child:</th>
<th>Tutor Group:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am applying for leave of absence for my child for .................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from:</td>
<td>to:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of school days:</th>
</tr>
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<p>| The exceptional circumstances for which leave is requested: |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has your child already had leave of absence in this School year?</td>
<td>YES / NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If YES, please give dates and details:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signed: (Parent/Carer)</td>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To be completed by the Head of School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupil’s attendance level over the last 12 months:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Late Marks over the last 12 months:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would granting this request mean attendance would fall below 95%?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Having considered your request carefully, my decision is that leave of absence is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>The absence will be recorded as authorised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not approved</td>
<td>The absence will be recorded as unauthorised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanatory notes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signed:</th>
<th>(Head of School)</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Parent/Carer)</td>
<td></td>
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