

# Why Pathways Has a Notice Period

## **A simple guide for families - creating stability for teachers, students and our community**

At Pathways, we want every family to feel cared for, every student to feel supported, and every teacher to have a stable, reliable income. To make that happen, our term planning begins weeks before a new term starts.

With lots of students and many staff members, our scheduling is a huge puzzle that we put together carefully to make sure everyone gets the right room, the right time, and the right teacher.

Because of this, we have a Week 5 notice period for stopping lessons or requesting major timetable changes for the following term. We know life doesn't always follow a neat calendar, but this timeframe allows us to organise the next term in a way that is fair, financially stable, and fully staffed.

Here's why the notice period matters:

### **1. We finalise teachers' hours in advance**

Many of our teachers are permanent part-time or full-time employees. Their income, contracted hours, and weekly workload are planned and confirmed before the new term begins.

If cancellations come in too late, those hours can't be reallocated — and teachers lose income they were relying on.

### **2. Your time slot is held for the entire term**

Once your lesson time is booked, it becomes unavailable to other families. We design the whole schedule around locking in that weekly spot for you.

When a cancellation arrives after the term planning is complete, it's extremely difficult to fill that space without causing disruption to the rest of the timetable.

### **3. We close for several weeks over the summer break**

During our December/January closure, the admin and teaching teams are not working, so we can't make large structural changes to the timetable at that late stage. The planning must be done before we close to ensure the term is ready to go when students return. It's a similar situation in the April, July and October holidays where we physically shut our doors in the off-period.

### **4. We're protecting our whole community — not enforcing a penalty**

We never want families to feel "locked in."

The notice period isn't about penalties; it exists so we can:

- Give your teacher reliable income
- Avoid over-hiring and risking job security
- Prevent overfull or understaffed timetables
- Ensure we don't promise more lessons than we can deliver
- Keep lesson fees stable for everyone

It's simply what allows a school of our size to run smoothly and sustainably.

### **5. Flexibility when you're away: The Holiday-Hold Option**

If you're travelling for three weeks or more, you can use our 50% holiday-hold option to keep your time slot and teacher while you're away.

This helps your teacher maintain stable income, and ensures your preferred time is waiting for you when you return.

Families who use this option never lose their place — even during long absences.

### **6. We're always happy to talk things through**

If you have unexpected changes or special circumstances, please reach out. We're here to help you find the best option for your family. While we can't always bend the structural rules (for the reasons above), we can help you navigate alternative solutions such as makeup lessons, temporary adjustments, or a holiday-hold arrangement.

#### **★ In short...**

Our policies exist for one reason:

To protect the wellbeing of our students, the stability of our teachers, and the long-term health of the Pathways community. We're committed to being transparent, kind, and fair — and we're always here to support you.

# THE LAW AROUND CANCELLATION POLICIES

## **The following section explains Australian Law surrounding Cancellation Policies in businesses like ours :**

At Pathways, we take our legal obligations seriously, and we want every family to feel confident that our policies are fair, transparent, and fully compliant with Australian law.

Under the Australian Consumer Law (ACL), businesses are allowed to set reasonable Terms & Conditions — including notice periods, cancellation rules, and fee requirements — as long as these conditions are clearly communicated to customers before they enter into an agreement.

Our cancellation and notice-period policies meet all of these legal requirements because:

### **1. Families agree to our Terms & Conditions before lessons begin.**

Every student enrolling at Pathways receives our full Terms & Conditions and is asked to sign to confirm they understand and accept them. This signed agreement forms the basis of the enrolment contract for each term.

This means our notice period, cessation policy, and holiday-hold option are not "surprise" terms — they are fully disclosed and voluntarily accepted at the time of enrolment, which satisfies the ACL's transparency requirements.

### **2. Our policies are considered "reasonable" under Australian law**

The ACL permits businesses to charge for services that have been booked and staffed in advance — especially where the business:

- Reserves a specific time slot for the customer
- Allocates resources and staff to deliver that service
- Incurs costs whether the customer attends or not
- Cannot realistically fill the space on short notice

Because Pathways must roster teachers, book rooms, and arrange a full term of lessons in advance, our notice period and term-fee requirements fall into the category of reasonable business practices that the law allows.

### **3. Our policies are publicly available and easy to access**

In addition to the signed enrolment document, our Terms & Conditions are always available on our website so families can revisit them at any time.

You can read them here:

<https://www.pathwaysmusic.com.au/portal>

This dual availability (signed copy + website copy) further satisfies the ACL's requirement that contract terms be clear, accessible, and provided upfront.

### **4. Our policies are designed to protect the whole community, not to penalise families**

Australian law allows notice periods and cancellation fees when these policies are necessary for operational and staffing stability.

At Pathways, notice periods ensure we can honour:

- Teacher income
- Staffing obligations
- Room allocations
- Fair enrolment opportunities for other families

These are all legally recognised reasons for having structured cancellation rules.

Pathways' policies exist not to create inconvenience, but to ensure a safe, sustainable, and high-quality learning environment for every student and every teacher.

## **Questions?**

We'll be more than happy to talk through any questions or queries you may have.

**Call us :**  
**08 7081 4199**