



Cramlington Village Primary School Policy Promoting Positive Attendance



“Empowering everyone to achieve”

Policy Title	Attendance Policy Policy
Policies that inter-relate	Home School Agreement
Legal and Statutory documents linked	Education Act 1986
Governor Committee responsibility	Education
Date of last review	January 2017
Reviewer name and position	Alison Malcolm, Governor
Date of next review	Spring 2018
Date approved by Governors	January 2017
Audit file updated (date and name)	January 2017



Aims and Objectives

It is vital that children arrive on time and attend every day in order to gain the greatest benefit from their education. If the reason for the absence is unavoidable, procedures are in place to notify the school, which ensure the safeguarding of children, and that school is aware of reasons for absence.

It is very important therefore that families make sure that their child attends regularly and the attendance policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why is regular attendance so important?

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning and progress

Any child's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Lateness and absence affects children's emotional security as they frequently feel that they miss events and activities, and feel less part of the school community.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parent's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and **may result in prosecution**.

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1986, the parent is responsible for making sure that the child of compulsory school age receives efficient full time education that is suitable to the age, ability and aptitude of individual children. Compulsory school age is defined as beginning from the age of five.

If it appears a child is not receiving a suitable education then, under Section 437 of the Education Act, the school must begin proceedings for issuing a school attendance order. Since March 2001, a higher offence warrant, compelling a parent to attend court, can be issued. Prosecution under section 444 can lead to a custodial sentence.

Authorised and Unauthorised absence

The ultimate responsibility to authorise absence rest with the powers devolved to the Principal by the Governing Body. An absence can be classed as unauthorised when:

- A child is kept off school because a parent is ill
- A child is absent because a sibling is ill
- The parent cannot get the child to school
- A child is taken on a shopping trip
- The child is absent due to a birthday treat/ family treat
- The child is absent due to family work patterns
- The child refuses to come to school or wants to stay at home
- A child is more than 30 minutes late without a satisfactory explanation



- The child is taken on a family holiday without authorisation from the Principal

If a member of staff is concerned that an absence, or pattern of absences are not justified this should be reported to the Principal/Vice Principal, who may request the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to visit the family. Before making a referral, the class teacher should try to establish why the pupil is absent. Even if a reason is given, the class teacher may feel that this is unacceptable and refer the matter to the Principal. Similarly, when a pupil is missing school regularly through illness it may be appropriate to refer the matter to the EWO before the absence is authorised. The EWO may decide to make a visit on welfare grounds to discuss the levels of attendance.

All children's unauthorised absences are recorded (including unauthorised holiday absences) on an annual report to parents.

An investigation into the reasons for any causes of concern, i.e. when attendance is below 90% in any half term, will be undertaken and where appropriate discussed with the EWO. It is a legal requirement for a school to report percentages of authorised and unauthorised absence to the Department for Education.

Promoting regular attendance

The Principal should:

- Ensure that legal requirements are being met with regard to attendance
- Be responsible for the operational management of the attendance policy
- Remind staff at the beginning of the academic year about the contents of this policy and correct procedures for completing registers.
- Meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to discuss any attendance issues which arise
- Follow up individual children, classes or year groups and analyse attendance data to identify trends that can enable school to target its efforts.

The Governing Body should:

- Know about the attendance procedures at CVPS.
- Have a designated governor with responsibility for monitoring and supporting school attendance.
- Perform the roles of 'critical friend' at Governor meetings.

The School should:

- ensure that all children attending have access to exciting and inspiring learning experiences
- offer every child the opportunity to succeed in academic and non-academic activities
- ensure that all staff are welcoming



- understand the holistic nature of each child's individual needs
- be punctual at the beginning and end of each school day
- reward the best attendees who have been consistently punctual
- analyse authorised and unauthorised attendance, class by class
- provide information and guidance to parents if they need help with attendance
- work with external bodies such as the education welfare officer (EWO), the school community nurse and Social Services to work with families experiencing regular problems with attendance
- inform parents of their child's attendance records and request meetings when regular absences become apparent
- contact parents when their child/ren misses 10% of the educational entitlement during the previous half term

Class Teachers should:

- ensure monitoring of regular absences
- complete the electronic register on time daily at 8.40am and again at 12.45pm. Lateness after these times is an unauthorised absence, unless it is for a medical appointment or other reason authorised by the Principal.
- discuss with the Principal any individuals who are not attending regularly

Families should:

- ensure children understand the importance of regular attendance
- support school by both getting children to school and collecting on time
- book holiday during the 13 weeks of school holidays that are available
- appreciate the legal framework within which attendance at school operates
- work in partnership with school when there are problems
- provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address
- notify the school in person or by telephone when their child is unable to attend with a reason on the first day of absence
- provide a note indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician prior to the appointment, except in the case of emergencies
- advise the school if a child is going to be late

Administrative staff should:

- Ensure daily attendance data is submitted onto the Integris system by 8.45am
- Contact parents for any children who are absent by 9am if messages have not been received
- Issue letters to promote improved attendance and timekeeping to parents/carers when there are persistent problems
- Monitor every individual's attendance for irregular patterns and absences
- Complete reports for the Principal on;



- continuous absence,
- persistent lateness trends,
- four instances of absence
- Percentage attendance for below 90% and 80% at the end of every half term
- pupil yearly attendance at the end of the first half of the summer term
- Our focus will centre on activities that promote regular attendance and punctuality such as;
 - celebrating good attendance and punctuality by displaying individual and class achievements;
 - rewarding good or improving attendance and punctuality through class competitions, certificates and outings/events.
 - updating information re attendance and punctuality regularly to parents through our regular weekly school newsletter

Working in close partnership, we hope to ensure all parents are aware of our attendance policy by:

- Including key aspects in parent handbook
- Making reference to it as part of enrolment procedures
- Reinforce it at parent induction meetings and parent information events
- Ensure the policy is available on our website
- Clarifying the different term dates so that parents know to make use of them for family holidays
- Explain the differences between authorised and unauthorised holidays

We will analyse and monitor attendance, and use our management information data to compare our attendance with national averages, focusing on:

- Attendance of different groups of children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from ethnic minority groups
- The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent (if any)
- Patterns of absence relating to times of year, days of the week and particular class or year groups
- Weather patterns and effect on attendance rates

We will support children with poor attendance to catch up with any work missed, and will involve the Educational Welfare Officer and other in house personnel to support our school to maximise attendance rates.

Persistent Absentees

This policy and the parent information book inform parents what is deemed persistent absenteeism and details the actions that are taken by the support network internally and externally to reduce absence for persistent absentees.



The Education Welfare Officer

Parents will be informed of the powers of the EWO and the penalty notices that they can issue because of repeated unauthorised absence.

Parents will also be informed of the support network that is available to target families who struggle with the everyday demands of parenting.

School will have a senior member of the staff team who will take responsibility for monitoring the attendance records and ensuring that children are given appropriate pastoral care during times of turbulence at home.

Punctuality

School starts on time at 8.30 daily. Parents should ensure children are at school for this time so they can take part in the games and general introduction to the day that maps out the planned learning. This helps the children to feel included in what is happening and to feel part of the discussion so they can direct the nature of the planned learning for the day.

Holidays in term time

Our term dates allow families to take time off during school holidays that will facilitate annual 2 week holidays to take place at lower costs on a more regular basis throughout the year. School urge parents to take advantage of this time during designated school holidays as there will be very few situations that will attract authorised holidays outside of this period. Any other planned time off during school term time must be requested beforehand and at least with 14 days' notice.

In some circumstances authorised time off school will not be granted:

- at the start of a new school year
- during Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) for Year 6
- for pupils whose attendance is already below 90 or would fall below 90% because of the requested time off
- **It is school policy that any holidays requested during school term time are not classed as authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

Legal Duty

The school has a legal duty to publish its attendance figures both to parents and to the Secretary of State for Education. All staff and governors are committed to ensuring that the profile of attendance at our school remains high. We respectfully ask that parents support this and promote high attendance by following the aims of CVPS



Appendix 1
Code register: NEW ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
@	Do not use	Unauthorised absence
B	Educated off site (<i>NOT Dual registration</i>)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	DfE #: School closed to pupils (<i>set through SIMS.net diary</i>)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure (<i>set through SIMS.net diary</i>)	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Do not use	Not counted in possible attendances
!	DfE: Non-compulsory school age attendance	Not counted in possible attendances
*	DfE Z: Pupil not on roll	Not counted in possible attendances



#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
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Appendix 2

Date:

Attendance below 90% letter

Parent/Carer of

Dear Parent/Carer

The attendance target set by the government for primary schools is 96%.

I am writing to you regarding our concerns for your child's attendance. Since XxXXXXXXXXXX, the attendance ofstands at%.....days missed out of a possible.....(please see the attendance printout attached).

We are aware that there may be a very good reason for your child's absence from school; however we would just like to keep you informed about the situation and we will continue to monitor your child's attendance. If it drops further a decision will be made regarding whether or not the school will authorise absence without presentation of medical evidence.

Our Education welfare Officer is Anne Canon. Her role includes the monitoring of attendance of all pupils who attend this school. We will be monitoring your child's attendance over the next few weeks and would be more than happy to discuss the matter further with you.

Please complete and return this slip to the School Office to acknowledge that you have read and understood its content.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

**Deborah Wylie
Principal**

**Ann Canon
Education Welfare Officer**

.....

Child's Name Class.....

I acknowledge receipt of the letter regarding my child's attendance that is currently below 90%.

Signed.....parent/carers.....date



Appendix 3

Date.....

Attendance below 80% letter

Parent/Carer of.....

Dear Parent/Carer

The attendance target set by the government for primary schools is 96%.

I am writing to you regarding our concerns for your child's attendance. Since September 2009, the attendance ofstands at%.....days missed out of a possible.....(please see the attendance printout attached). This is well below the government target and is currently a cause for concern.

We are aware that there may be a very good reason for your child's absence from school; however due tos current level of attendance we are referring this matter to the Education Welfare Officer, Anne Canon. Her role includes monitoring of attendance of all pupils who attend this school.

To be able to authorise any further absences we will now require medical evidence i.e.

- Appointment Card with child's name
- Hospital Letter
- Written Prescription
- Doctor's note

Please complete and return this slip to the School Office to acknowledge that you have read and understood its content.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely
Deborah Wylie
Principal

Ann Canon
Education Welfare Officer

.....

Name of child.....Class.....

I acknowledge receipt of the letter regarding my child's attendance that is currently below 80%.

Signed.....parent/carers.....date



Appendix 4

Date:

Lateness Letter 1

Parent/Carer of.....

Dear Parent/Carer

We are aware that.....has been regularly arriving late to school (please see attached attendance printout).

Attendance and punctuality is a very high priority at Cramlington Village Primary School. It is vital that your child arrives in good time for school. Regularly arriving late not only disrupts the teacher and pupils, it also causes embarrassment for your child.

Please ensure that your child arrives at school for 08.30am so that their class teacher can register them and receive an attendance mark when the register is taken at 08.45am. If your child continues to arrive after the register has closed, you may be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

We will be closely monitoring the punctuality of your child over the next 4 weeks and reviewing the situation at the end of this period.

Please complete and return this slip to the School Office to acknowledge that you have read and understood its content.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

**Deborah Wylie
Principal**

.....

Name of child.....Class.....

I acknowledge receipt of the letter regarding my child's punctuality.

Signed.....parent/carer.....date



Appendix 5

Date:

Lateness Letter 2

Parent/Carer of.....

Dear Parent/Carer

With reference to my letter dated.....I am writing to you once again regarding
.....continual lateness.

The Education Act 1996 states that it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so results in you, the parent/carers, committing an offence.

To datehas been late onsessions in which.....sessions have been recorded as unauthorised absences. (Please see attached copy of your child's attendance printout).

As there has been no significant improvement, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is now aware of this. Anne Canon is the school's EWO.

Please complete and return this slip to the School Office to acknowledge that you have read and understood its content.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Wylie
Principal

.....

Name of child.....Class.....

I acknowledge receipt of the letter regarding my child's punctuality.

Signed.....parent/carers.....date